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ABSTRACT

This English pronunciation manual for adults was developed by teachers for teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL), specifically aimed at those who do not have training in linguistics or foreign language instruction. It is a compendium of methodologies used by ESL teachers and is not aimed at any particular foreign language learner. Chapters include an overview of the principles and theories of language; specific help on the individual sounds of English in words, phrases, and sentences; a listing of foreign language specific (from Arabic to Vietnamese) grammatical and syntactical linguistic interference that teachers may encounter; a supply of foreign language-specific practice sentences; and several practical, meaningful, and enjoyable basic pronunciation activities for students. A feedback survey for ESL teachers is included. Contains 23 references. (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education) (NAV)

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ED 393 323

ON SPEAKING TERMS

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ON SPEAKING TERMS

After using the manual, please share your thoughts, comments and ideas by completing and returning this survey to the above address.

Information about the Manual

1. What was your initial impression of On Speaking Terms?

2. Which sections were most helpful?

3. What was least helpful?

4. Are the descriptions of how the sounds are formed clear?

5. Did you modify, adapt, or add to the sentences in Sec. III?

6. Did your students find the materials helpful?

7. How consistently have you used the book?

8. Are there other languages you would like to see added?

PA601113

9. Please provide other recommendations, ideas and concerns.

Professional Information

1. What level of ESL do you teach?

2. How many hours per week does your class meet?

3. What kind of certification do you have?

4. What kind of training do you have in linguistics/ESL/foreign language training?

5. How do you incorporate pronunciation practice in your classroom activities?

6. As an ESL teacher what are your professional concerns or needs?

7. How can the Resource Center assist you in meeting those needs?

8. What ESL staff development topics would you recommend?

ON SPEAKING TERMS

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Euclid, Ohio
1994

FOREWARD

The purpose of this project was to provide ESL teachers with a reproducible pronunciation manual. ABLE ESL teachers often do not have training in linguistics and foreign language instruction or, if they do understand the importance and mechanics of language instruction, they don't often have access to classroom sets of pronunciation books. We hope this project fills that void.

A secondary purpose of this project was to offer an opportunity to ESL teachers to share their talents and experience, collaborative learning at its best. The teachers applied and were chosen because of their expertise, experience and enthusiasm for the project. This is a manual written by ABLE/ESL teachers and for ABLE/ESL teachers. It is an attempt to simplify and de-mystify the complicated field of linguistics. We purposely avoided jargon and oversimplified where necessary. We may occasionally step on some linguistic toes, but in the process we hope we have produced something that is useful, simple and helpful.

With the possible exception of the day Marianna, my wonderful Brazilian student, who after weeks of trying finally heard the difference between "Tuesday" and "Thursday," nothing in my personal experience has brought me greater pleasure. It was a rare privilege to share and work with such a talented group of professionals.

We have included a survey in the manual so our collaborative efforts can extend to you, the user. Such field based research will be helpful in future projects. Please share your comments, experience and ideas.

G. W. G.

TO THE TEACHER: Book Design

Section I - An Overview of Language

Instead of technical terms and abstract theories, the principles are explained in commonly-used language. Definitions for these ideas are written so that additional resources should not be necessary to obtain a basic understanding of the term.

We chose to err on the side of simplicity when selecting terms for use in the manual. Our purpose was not to reinvent the wheel, but rather to give an overview of some of the practical pronunciation techniques we have found to be effective.

Section II - Individual Sounds of English

Some sounds were combined, as they are so similar in pronunciation that a non-native speaker would not be able to discern the differences. Included for each sound are:

common names (short a)
the phonetic symbol
common spellings of the sound
an illustration of the mouth shape
a key word that contains the sound

Production - Production describes the physical aspects of making the sound in non-technical terms. Sounds that are related, such as the voiced sound "d" and the voiceless sound "t," are compared when applicable.

Words - The words demonstrate the sound in the initial, final, and medial position, starting from the least difficult to the most difficult position to produce. Several spelling variations for the sound were included when possible.

Contrasting pairs - This section provides a comparison of the target sound with sounds that might easily be confused by the student, or that may be substituted in error. For example, the voiceless "th" sound in the initial position might be heard or reproduced by the student as possibly a "d," "t," or "z" sound. By comparing these sounds, the student may be able to distinguish the target sound from similar sounds.

Phrases - The sound is repeated in a set of ten phrases which are used in everyday English. The phrases were selected both for the repetition of the sound and for creating a basis for conversation. They are also rich vocabulary and idiom practice.

Sentences - This section extends the practice in context. Even if the sound is not difficult for all students, they will still benefit from the spelling review and vocabulary practice.

Section III - Linguistic Interference

Linguistic interference is the grammatical and syntactic "baggage" that a non-native speaker carries along when he or she is attempting to learn a new language. For example, if a teacher who speaks no Vietnamese had a Vietnamese student enter the class, the teacher would be able to understand why the student has trouble with multi-syllable words in English, word order, etc.

There are also characteristic pronunciation difficulties that a non-native speaker will bring to the English class as part of this linguistic interference. If a Turkish student comes into class, more than likely that student will have difficulty pronouncing the "w" sound. With this knowledge, the teacher can better understand and guide the student to better pronunciation.

Section IV - Practice Sentences

Language-specific exercises for each of the twenty targeted languages can be reproduced and given to the student for practice in both hearing and producing the sound. The sentences can be used quickly and easily so that the student has effective and individualized material to practice at home and in class. They can be referred to repeatedly as individual practice.

Section V - Pronunciation Activities

These basic activities can be utilized in the course of a language class to reinforce pronunciation lessons. The activities may be short and simple, but they offer the English student an opportunity to repeat problem sounds in a safe, structured environment. It is hoped that these activities will also inspire teachers to incorporate pronunciation practice as a regular part of their classroom routine.

PLEASE NOTE: FEEL FREE TO COPY ANY SECTION OF THIS BOOK.

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SECTION V . . . . . **Pronunciation Activities and Bibliography**

PRONUNCIATION

Introduction

The purpose of this section of the book is to introduce key concepts and terms to ABLE/ESL teachers.

Teaching ESL is, first and foremost, foreign-language instruction. We are not English teachers, we are foreign-language teachers--a critical distinction. As English teachers we tend to focus on the structure of the language. As foreign-language teachers we focus on communication. In other words, if our students can't be understood when they speak, all the irregular verb practice and non-count noun discussions in the world won't help.

Many of us have a limited foreign-language background. This section is an overview of the study of language, what elements of language are important, and a list of key terms.

Overview

Linguistics is the study of language as a system of communication. Phonetics is the study of sounds. Linguists agree on this much (usually). They don't, however, agree on much more (or so it seems). There is great disagreement over how languages are learned or how they should be taught. There is even disagreement over how many sounds exist in the English language and what symbols should be used to represent them. Teaching pronunciation is complicated by students' native languages, their age and their ability to learn a language. As with math, some students have more difficulty than others; even their personality can affect their outcome. (For example, an outgoing person may take more risks and speak with strangers more easily.) Finally, practice is critical. Too often, students are surrounded by their families and friends and don't have opportunities to practice English.

BACK TO BASICS

There are many approaches to teaching pronunciation and speaking skills. The ultimate goal is to improve communication through suprasegmentals (a group which continues over more than one sound using stress, intonation, etc.). To be understood, the student must be able to use the music of the language as well as the sounds. In order to teach pronunciation and communication skills, some basic understanding of language and English is needed.

Spelling and Pronunciation

English is not a phonetic language (i.e., one letter does not always represent a specific sound). Some languages are phonetic and this can confuse students. Don't assume your students understand this fact. By explaining that English is not phonetic, you can allay a lot of confusion. In other words, explain that words like dough, tough, thought and bough exist in English. The language is crazy; the students aren't.

However, also explain that there are patterns of spelling. In fact over 80% of our words fit into these patterns. For example, the sound "ow" is consistently spelled either ow (cow) or ou (as in house). **Phonics** (the relationship between letters and sound) is very different from the linguistic term **phonetic**. So while students cannot look at a word and know automatically how to pronounce it, if they hear a sound they can learn the predictable ways to spell it.

Vowels and Consonants

While consonants usually are consistent in sound, vowels are not. There are more vowel sounds than letters to represent them. (v = vowel, c = consonant)

Long vowels usually require two letters for the sound.

meat	or	meet	mete
vv		vv	vcv

Short vowels usually require only one letter.

met	not
cvc	cvc

Short vs. long vowels are the most difficult sounds for students to hear and reproduce. For example:

hat	vs.	hate
mat	vs.	mate
not	vs.	note

** Spend time explaining the difference between long and short vowels. This helps their pronunciation and does wonders for their spelling. Explain in simple terms that a long vowel says the name of the letter (ex. eat). It usually takes two letters to make a long vowel sound. "The first (vowel) does the talking, the second does the walking" - i.e. the second vowel is silent. Short vowel sounds are usually spelled with only one letter. Short vowel sounds are hard for most students to hear and produce. They are the "ugly" sounds of English, the grunting sounds that sound so unfamiliar to many students.

Sounds and Production

Vowels are sounds made with unrestricted flow (from teeth, lips etc.). All vowels are voiced (use vocal chords). There are front, middle and back vowels.

Consonants are sounds which are interrupted by teeth, lips, tongue or soft palate (top of the mouth). They may be voiced (use of vocal chords) or unvoiced (no use of vocal chords). They may stop (as in p , b , a , k , g , t) or they may continue, or flow (as in m , n , f , v etc.)

Voiced vs. unvoiced - "B" and "P" are produced in exactly the same way. The difference is that one is voiced and one is unvoiced. Have students place their hands on their Adam's apple (or over their ears) to feel the difference. Voiced sounds use vocal chords, unvoiced do not.

Nasals (m, n, ng) - Some sounds are made with air pressing through the nose, not the mouth. (Have students hold their noses shut to hear the differences.)

Use the descriptions of productions of sounds in Section II to help students use the right parts of their mouth to produce a sound. **Aural skills** (learning to hear a sound) and **oral skills** (learning to produce a sound) are an essential and significant, but small part, of communication.

Technical terms such as fricatives, glides and the precise pictures are available in any good pronunciation manual. Some teachers find them useful; many do not. A bibliography is attached if more information is needed.

Production in Context

Phonology (the study of sound patterns) is the next step in pronunciation. Sounds are sometimes pronounced differently according to their position in a word or sentence. Students should be aware of these patterns. The "t" in toe is pronounced differently from the "t" in little.

Aspiration is the burst of air from some sounds (p, t, k). However, when (for example) an "s" comes before a "p," the air stops and the sound is not aspirated. Try these words:

pot	spot
to	stew
pier	spear

Some sounds are aspirated more in other languages and students may need to practice this.

Flapping - when a "t" sound is placed between an accented and unaccented vowel, it often becomes a "d" sound. Examples are :

butter ("budder") putting ("pudding")
patio ("padio")
got to go ("godda go")

R-Coloring - The consonant R following a vowel can affect the pronunciation of that vowel. The vowel sound becomes obscured and is changed by the "r" influence. Examples are:

ear
beer
bear

Digraphs are two or more letters that join together to make a new sound. Digraphs include:

ch	choice
ng	ring
sh	shoe
th	thing
th	this

These may be new sounds for students and may require extra practice.

Consonant Clusters (blends) are common letter combinations such as spr, st, spl (initial) or nk, lk, nd (final). For a variety of reasons, these can cause great difficulty for students. Students may add a vowel ("street" becomes "estreet" to a native Spanish speaker) or they may delete a consonant ("green" becomes "geen" or "fast" becomes "fat"). These are language-specific problems.

Stress (more commonly known as accent) occurs in syllables, words and sentences. Each is important for pronunciation.

- Stressed vowels are longer and louder in English. (In many languages they are only
  louder.)
- Almost all unstressed vowels become the same reduced vowel sound.

- **[schwa (uh)]**. **This causes a great deal of trouble for students**, as many languages do not have reduced (or neutral) vowels. The unaccented vowel (whether it's a, e, i, o or u) becomes an "uh" (reduced) sound in contextual spoken English. In other words, the word turnip when pronounced alone may be "turn-ip," but in a sentence or phrase becomes "turn-up" as in "The turnip is large."

  Some examples are:

appeal	(uh-peal)	second (sec-uhnd)
college	(coll-uhge)	tulip (tul-uhp)

- syllable - stress on two syllable words is generally:

  noun - first syllable
  verb - second syllable

English as a Stress-Timed Language

English is a stress-timed language, in which we stress content words not syllables. Many other languages such as French are syllable-timed in which speech forms a regular rhythms according to syllables. Content words include:

nouns	adjectives
main verbs	interrogatives
adverbs	interrogatives

Function words which are not usually stressed include:

articles
auxiliaries
pronouns
prepositions
conjunctions

This difference in stress pattern is very important. Speakers of Hindi, for example, may be very difficult to understand more because of the differences in their stress pattern than their "accent."

Intonation is the music of the language, or the rise and fall of the pitch. Generally in English, pitch falls at the end of a sentence and rises at the end of a question. Example:

I'm going home.
Am I going home?

Linking is the connecting of words or word groups together. Classic examples include:

wanna (want to)
gonna (going to)

Often in English we connect the last sound of a word to the beginning sound of the next word. So in this sentence, "The boy walks fast" becomes "The boy walk-sfast." We don't carefully pronounce every word or syllable in English. This makes it difficult for students to understand us and to reproduce our pronunciation patterns. Teaching some of the common production "tips" such as linking (wanna, whaddya etc.) can make a significant difference in students' ability to understand and be understood. Besides, they love practicing them. Whaddya Say? by Weinstein is a good source.

Other Linguistic Terms

Syntax is word order. The usual pattern in English is:

Noun Verb Object

This is not necessarily true of all languages. Understanding the basic English word patterns helps all facets of students language skills (i.e. reading writing, speaking, and listening).

In a **declined language** the form (and spelling) of the word changes as its grammatical function changes. For example, in Russian the word book as a subject is **kniga**, but book as a direct object is **knigu**. Students need to know English is not a declined (inflected) language.

Phoneme means sound.
Grapheme means letter.
Morpheme means word.

One of the difficulties in linguistics is that while it is a science, it is also an art. Language is fluid and constantly changing and technical terms become overused and confused with laymen's terms. Accent, for example, has taken on many meanings other than stress; phonics and phonetics are often interchanged and then there is the poetry of a language. How do you "explain" the beauty of Shakespeare or the genius of Dr. Seuss?

This section presents the science of the language. However, also keep in mind in that you are teaching the art of language. Help your students understand that a language is more than a collection of words. Help them understand the art as well as the science.

PRONUNCIATION TIPS

English has roughly 44 sounds (depending on their classification). All languages combined have roughly 100 sounds. Children through the age of about adolescence maintain the ability to natively produce most sounds. Among all the other things that go haywire at puberty, the ability to distinguish non-native sounds diminishes. **If you can't distinguish a sound, you can't duplicate it.** Here are some basic tips

Step #1 — Teach your students to hear the sounds of English (Section II). Students must hear the sounds before they can repeat them. Although some of the sounds exist in their language, some do not.

Step #2 — Teach your students to produce the sound. Physically explain how the sound is made (put your teeth on your bottom lip, etc.). Use a mirror, exaggerate, compare and contrast. The production of each sound is explained in Section III. Practice the sound in all three positions (initial is easiest, medial the most difficult specific to learn).

Step #3 — Identify difficult sounds for the student. Read through Section III on linguistic interference. Identify which sounds a Japanese student, for example, has trouble producing and explain those problem areas to the student. Highlight them, exaggerate them, make the student aware of them.

Step #4 — Practice, Practice, Practice. Once a student can physically hear and produce the sound, have him/her practice in context. Language, after all, does not come in isolated sounds. Use section IV (Language-specific sentences) over and over again. Tape-record the students if possible so they can hear themselves improving. Tape-record yourself so they can model stress and intonation. It's important, though, that students develop a sensitivity and awareness to the sounds and patterns they need to correct.

Step #5 Make pronunciation practice an integral part of your class. Section V of the book offers a variety of ways to practice pronunciation. Make a conscious effort in each class to devote time to the practice of pronunciation.

Elements of Pronunciation

Age, language ability and desire will affect the students' progress. Few adults will completely reduce their accents. **(The goal should not be to eliminate the accent, but to help the student be more easily understood.)** Concentrate on the sounds and/or patterns of speech which interfere with them being understood.

More importantly, get your students to speak. Encourage discussion in your class where they feel "safe" making mistakes. Give them speaking assignments. Gently correct them in the course of discussion. Give them topics for discussion (next Tuesday we'll talk about favorite foods) so they can prepare and learn the vocabulary.

(Be aware of ESL teachers' greatest hazard - Don't talk too much.)

A Final Note . . .

Humor is one of the highest levels of language, one of our most basic needs and one of the most neglected areas of study. Do what you can to integrate humor into your classroom. Tell jokes. Teach you students how to tell a joke. Share funny stories. Laugh out loud and encourage your students to do so. Humor can bridge a lot of oceans and make us all feel more comfortable and more easily understood.

A Very Final Note . . .

May my oversimplifications and/or deletions not disturb the eternal rest of my late, great linguistics professor, Dr. Bob Phillips.

. . . And may the "schwa" be with you.

Introduction

In English, the 26 letters of our alphabet can create between 40 and 44 basic phonemes (sounds). English is not a phonetic language (one sound is represented by one symbol), unlike Russian or Spanish which follow the alphabetic principle quite closely. In English, **spelling is not pronunciation.** More words in English are not spelled phonetically than words that are.

Knowing some of the spelling/phonetic inconsistencies can help students understand why they are having trouble in spelling or pronunciation. For example:

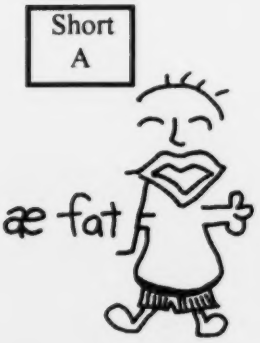
- A sound can be represented by more than one spelling, and the / f / sound in *f*an, *ph*otogra*ph*, and rou*gh*.
- The same letter can represent several different sounds as the / o / in w*o*men, c*o*ne, g*o*t, l*o*ve, and c*o*rk.
- Two letters may be combined to represent one sound, as in wat*ch*.
- "Silent" letters represent no sound at all, as in bak*e*. The "silent" letters may also influence the sound of other letters, as the long a sound in b*a*ke.

Moreover, because English has borrowed so many of its words from other languages, a systematic method of spelling and pronunciation cannot be applied. There is also the problem of regional dialects, which introduce additional discrepancies between spelling and sound.

Section II is designed to be used as a workbook of speech drills for use by students of all levels. Each page begins with a key word that represents a "target" sound in English. Common spellings are also listed for each target sound. Examples of the sound in different positions follow. The section on contrasting pairs is set up to develop the students' ability to discriminate the difference between the target sound and similar sounds. In this way we begin to introduce the idea that sounds are not made in isolation but are part of a specific context. The phrases and complete sentences demonstrate how the sounds are used in common speech as well as giving students practice in sound production.

Teachers are encouraged to add their own words, phrases, and sentences to the list. By no means is the material assembled here comprehensive. We hope we have provided a firm base for additional exercises and practice.

Common Spellings	
a	man
au	laugh



Production of Short A :

The tongue is relaxed, flat, and low behind the lower teeth. The bottom jaw drops and the sound is voiced (low position).

Words:

(INITIAL)	(MEDIAL)
as	fat
add	dad
attic	hat
answer	sad

Contrasting Pairs:

at/eat	mat/met	map/mop
at/ate	pan/pen	cat/cot
and/end	mass/mess	hat/hate

Phrases:

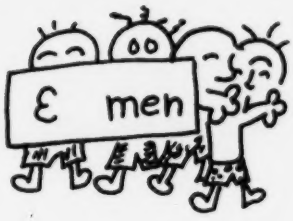
cat in the hat	answer the question
land on sand	ants in your pants
magic hat	Spanish class
hand in hand	adjectives and adverbs
fat cat	ham sandwich

Sentences:

Fat Pat sat on the mat.
Ann and Max had candy.
Andy was sad because Cathy was mad.

Common Spellings	
e	egg
a	any
ue	guess
ai	said
ea	head

Short E



Production of Short E:

The relaxed tongue is in the middle of the mouth. The jaw and face are also relaxed. Open the mouth and drop the lower jaw slightly making a voiced sound (mid position).

Words:

(INITIAL)	(MEDIAL)
any	set
enter	men
energy	Wednesday
Emily	pet

Contrasting Pairs:

end/and	bet/bat	pet/pit
ex/ax	set/sat	wet/wit
Ed/add	men/man	ten/tin

Phrases:

set the table	best friend
no energy left	bet your life
men's room	dead-end
guess again	Federal Express
ready, set, go	get ahead

Sentences:

Emily **e**ntered the contest **W**ednesday.
Ed likes **e**ggs **e**very day.
November **e**leventh is **E**llen's anniversary.

Common Spellings	
i	sit
hy	rhythm
y	cyst

Short I

Production of Short I:

Raise the tongue high and to the front of the relaxed mouth. Open the mouth only slightly. Make a voiced sound (high position).

Words:

(INITIAL)	(MEDIAL)
it	sit
if	give
is	quick
interest	his

Contrasting Pairs:

it/at	sick/seek	sit/set
it/eat	pick/peek	hid/had
is/ease	fill/feel	hit/hot

Phrases:

bit my lip	skinny dip
knit mittens	hit-skip
pet the kitten	flip my lid
ship-shape	British English
inner belt	in the city

Sentences:

Is it difficult?
Bill lives in the middle of the city.
Phil will sit still and take his pill.

Common Spellings	
o	hot
a	want
a (r)	garden

Production of Short O:

The tongue is relaxed in a wide open mouth with the jaw dropped. The tongue is resting on the bottom of the mouth. The sound is voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
art	ma	hot
odd	pa	cop
October	spa	watt
occupation	ha ha	father

Contrasting Pairs:

on/an	pot/pat	bomb/bum
are/ore	pot/putt	hot/hut
rot/rat	lock/luck	tot/taught

Phrases:

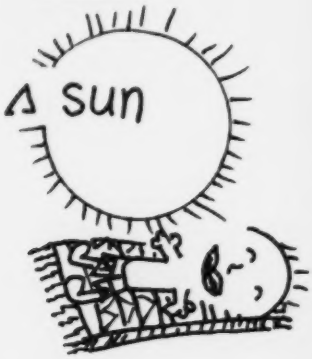
hop scotch	fox trot
hot shot	stop and shop
drop the mop	hot spot
odd jobs	50 watt bulb
crop-top	ma and pa

Sentences:

Usually **O**ctober is **n**ot **h**ot.
"**A**rtists **a**re an **o**dd **l**ot," said **A**rthur.
Bob and his **f**ather **s**hop at the **g**arden center.

Common Spellings	
u	up
ou	trouble

Short U



Production of Short U:

The mouth is opened slightly and the tongue is relaxed. The sound is voiced.

(INITIAL)	(MEDIAL)
us	cut
ugly	ton
other	stuck
umbrella	mother

Contrasting Pairs:

putt/pot	bug/bag	buck/book
cut/cot	luck/lock	cuff/cough
cup/cap	tug/tag	cut/caught

Phrases:

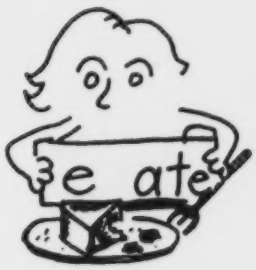
under the sun	mud puddle
ugly duckling	a month ago
undone	funny bunny
enough is enough	cut the cake
some fun	honey bun

Sentences:

The ugly mutt jumped into the mud puddle.
Honey buns cost too much money.
Doug is as snug as a bug in a rug.

Common Spellings	
a - e	take
ai	daily
ay	may
ey	hey
ea	break

Long A



Production of Long A:

The tongue is tense and in a middle position with the lips slightly parted in a tiny smile. The tongue tip touches the front bottom teeth.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
ate	say	date
age	pay	paper
ape	may	break
eighteen	holiday	main

Contrasting Pairs:

age/edge	bait/bat	ace/ice
late/let	mate/mat	pain/pin
pain/pen	wait/wet	raid/red

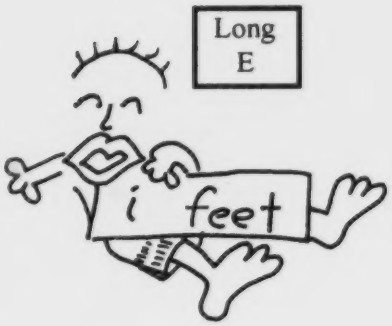
Phrases:

pay day	shake and bake
baby face	make my day
main gate	stay away
take a break	wide awake
bake a cake	potato pancakes

Sentences:

Jane placed her daisies in the gray vase.
Nate played with Jay all day.
Katie ate cake from a paper plate.

Common Spellings	
e - e	Pete
ei	either
ea	each
ee	seen
y	Mary



Production of Long E:

The tongue is high leaving only a tiny space with the mouth almost shut. The teeth are close together with a tense chin and mouth. The lips form a smile and the sound is voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
eat	flea	feet
equal	agree	meal
east	cookie	week
even	baby	peel

Contrasting Pairs:

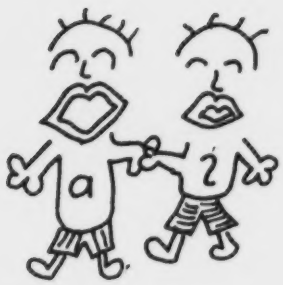
eel/ill	weak/wick	beat/built
sheep/ship	feel/file	feel/fell
meat/mitt	seat/sit	meal/Mel

Phrases:

tea and cookies	keep the peace
peach tree	please be neat
be a sweetie	green beans
agree with me	lean on me
three times a week	breathe deep

Sentences:

Jeannie and Mandy teach reading to people.
"Bees can be mean and sting," said Steve.
Sleet falls every week of January.



Common Spellings	
ei	height
i - e	mile
uy	guy
y	fly

Long I

Production of Long I:

The tongue is low in the mouth, then lightly touches the bottom front teeth with the tip. Lower the jaw and open lips wide. Raise jaw and make a voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
I	tie	diet
eye	sky	file
iris	shy	height
island	reply	invite

Contrasting Pairs:

I'll/oil	height/heat	bite/bit
tie/toil	might/meet	sight/sit
tie/tea	time/team	fight/fit

Phrases:

pie in the sky	I cried and cried
sty in my eye	I'm shy
high and dry	fly by night
might makes right	bye-bye
don't fight	Friday, July 9th

Sentences:

I'm five foot nine.
I invited Iris for pie and ice cream.
The fire was inviting on a cold night.

Long O

Common Spellings	
o	no
o - e	vote
oa	boat
oe	toe
ow	row
ew	sew
ough	dough

Production of Long O:

Round lips and place tongue low in the mouth. Raise the tongue toward the roof of the mouth. Make a voiced "oh" sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
old	show	cold
own	mow	hold
ocean	dough	foam
over	sew	hope

Contrasting Pairs:

row/raw	low/law	tone/ton
so/saw	sewn/sun	show/shoe
phone/fawn	bone/bun	blow/blue

Phrases:

overcoat	row your boat
overdue books	mow the lawn
oh, no!	go slow
know the ropes	roller coaster
hold the phone	blow your nose

Sentences:

Tomorrow Joan will go to the ocean.
Joe wrote home for dough.
Does Flo know the way home?

Common Spellings	
u	uniform
u - e	cute
oo	boot
ew	few
ui	fruit
oe	shoe

Long U

Production of Long U:

Lips are rounded with tongue midway in the mouth. Make a long voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
unit	due	cool
United States	true	group
uniform	blue	boot
use	through	recruit

Contrasting Pairs:

cool/coal	flute/float	Luke/luck
tool/toll	crew/crow	soon/son
boot/boat	boot/but	shoe/should

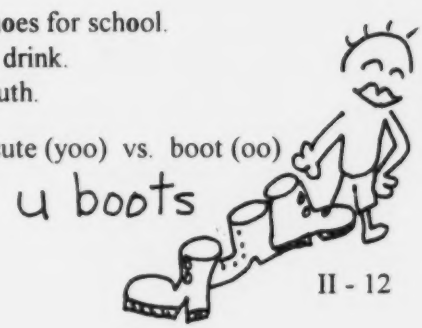
Phrases:

blue moon	new recruits
overdue	new shoes
true blue	boot camp
duty first	threw the ball
bluegrass music	cool school

Sentences:

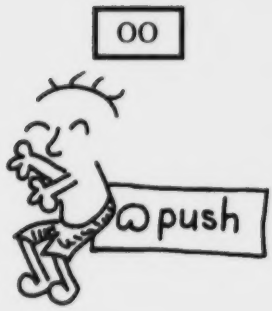
Ruth wanted new blue shoes for school.
Luke and Sue had a cool drink.
The bluebird flew due south.

* oo is sometimes classified separately from long u. cute (yoo) vs. boot (oo)



II - 12

Common Spellings	
oo	book
ou	should
u	sugar



Production of OO:

Lips are pushed out and slightly rounded. The tongue is midway. A short voiced sound is made.

Words:

(MEDIAL)

book
woman
could
crook

Contrasting Pairs:

could/coal	took/tool	cook/kook
could/cool	full/fool	foot/food
should/shoot	should/show	soot/suit

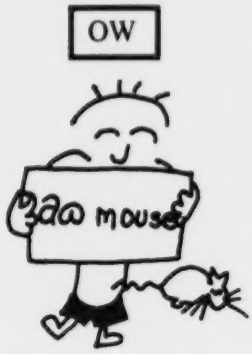
Phrases:

push a cart	cookbook
took a look	shook up
push and pull	took my book
look out	catch the crook
good looking	wool coat

Sentences:

She **sh**ook her right **foot**.
You **sh**ould use a **cookbook**.
The **w**oman **took** a **good look** at the **crook**.

Common Spellings	
ow	how
ou	our



Production of OW:

The tongue is low and against the bottom teeth. The mouth is wide open, then closed, making a puckered shape. A voiced sound is made.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
out	cow	pout
owl	now	house
hour	how	towel
ouch	allow	announce

Contrasting Pairs:

out/oat	our/or	mouth/moth
how/hoe	down/done	bough/bought
now/no	pout/putt	town/ton

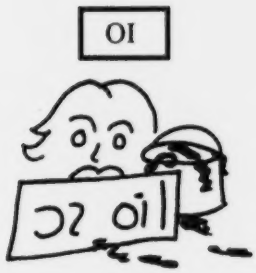
Phrases:

our cow	out and about
hour by hour	townhouse
no parking allowed	downtown
shower announcement	clown around
foul ball	ground round

Sentences:

I found flowers **out** on the **ground**.
A **shout** is a **loud sound**.
How did the **brown mouse** get into the **house**?

Common Spellings	
oi	oil
oy	toy



Production of OI:

Start with aw where the tongue is low and tense, the lips tight, and the jaw dropped. Slide into e by moving the tongue high and tensing the tongue and cheek muscles. The mouth pulls into a smile.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
oil	toy	boil
oyster	boy	point
ointment	joy	voice
oink	Roy	appointment

Contrasting Pairs:

boy/blow	voice/vow	toil/toll
choice/chess	joy/jaw	foil/foul
royal/roll	oil/earl	coil/call

Phrases:

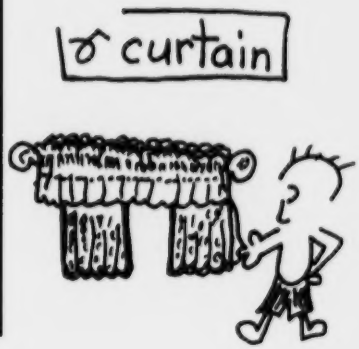
toys bring joy	foiled again
boiling point	boys will be boys
rubbing ointment	royal treatment
joyful noise	good choice
point it out	Detroit River

Sentences:

The toys brought joy to the boys.
Bring oil only to the boiling point.
After cooking oysters, wrap them in foil.

Common Spellings	
ir	fir
er	mother
ur	urban
or	harbor
ear	learn
R - controlled vowels *	

ER



Production of ER Stressed & Unstressed:

Cheek muscles are tightened and make a voiced "err" sound from the throat.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
urban	doctor	injured
earth	harbor	curtain
early	father	work
urge	sister	surgery

Contrasting Pairs:

stir/stay	burn/barn	turn/toil
work/weak	word/wired	further/father
first/fist	bird/beard	her/hair

Phrases:

mother and father	higher and higher
pull the curtain	professional photographer
fur collar	November thirtieth
help your mother	early bird
sister and brother	first birthday

Sentences:

Honor your father and mother.
Lower the curtain during the night.
Kurt's injured leg still hurts.

* Depending on the source, this is considered between one and five sounds. We have chosen to combine them.

Common Spellings	
au	taught
ou	cough
aw	saw
o	song
al	all

AW

Production of AW:

The tongue is tense and low away from the teeth. The lips are tense. The bottom jaw drops as you make a voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
August	paw	call
awful	law	bought
autumn	draw	wrong
automatic	saw	thought

Contrasting Pairs:

call/cole	saw/sew	paw/pow
hall/hole	taught/tot	gnaw/now
law/low	caught/cot	awed/odd

Phrases:

awful fall	bought a lot
lost cause	long fall
tall order	Santa Claus
daughter-in-law	wrong number
call for help	automatic withdrawal

Sentences:

Paul took a long walk through the **mall**.
Auggie cut the **lawn** twice in **August**.
He **thought** **Dawn** was an **awful** cook.

Common Spellings	
a	ago
e	open
i	medicine
o	opinion
u	upon

Note:

Vowels occurring in unstressed syllables often become the neutral vowel sound "uh". This causes a great deal of confusion for students. In their native languages vowels do not often change like this. By carefully pronouncing each vowel, they change both the rhythm and the sound, becoming even less understandable. According to Dixson, students will be much better understood if the accented syllable is stressed strongly and all remaining vowels are obscured.

Production of Schwa (uh):

The lips are relaxed and open slightly, and the tongue is in mid-position. The sound is voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
alone	sofa	spaghetti
another	China	demon
above	drama	moment
occur	zebra	popular

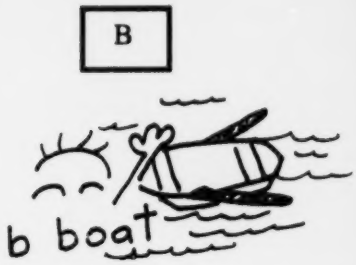
Phrases:

golden opportunity	fattening dessert
together again	porcelain china
professional photographer	telephone number
Christmas ornament	what's happening

Sentences:

Sudden noises often frighten my dog.
Kevin slept on the second sofa.
The other set of plates is fine china.

Common Spellings	
b	baby
bb	rubber



Production of B:

Both lips are closed; the air is stopped at the lips, then the lips open. There should not be any puff of air. This will give a voiced sound. P is identical but voiceless.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
beat	job	subject
bit	robe	member
bet	cab	maybe
but	cub	absent

Contrasting Pairs:

base/pace	lab/lap	swab/swap
bath/path	cob/cop	big/pig
beach/peach	pub/pup	amble/ample

Phrases:

by the bay
baby baboon
remember Bill
probably so
big boy

both of us
bread and butter
boring job
rubber band
burn your bridges

Sentences:

Bob will pro**b**ably **b**ecome a **B**oy Scout.
Barbara **b**uys fresh **b**read and **b**utter from the **b**aker.
Betty's **b**aby **b**oy has **b**lond hair and **b**lue eyes.

Common Spellings	
ch	chin
tch	match
tu	future

CH

Production of CH:

This sound is a combination of the t and the sh sounds. The front of the tongue is raised firmly to the gum ridge for the t sound. Lips protrude while the airstream is restricted there, the sh is added before releasing the ch sound. This gives a voiceless sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
chair	each	picture
chance	rich	kitchen
change	catch	century
child	watch	nature

Contrasting Pairs:

cheap/jeep	hunch/hunt	choke/joke
churn/turn	arch/art	batches/badges
chin/tin	etch/edge	cheat/sheet

Phrases:

fat chance	turn of the century
loose change	chunk of cheese
made for each other	pitcher and catcher
rich and famous	cheapskate
watch out	catch forty winks

Sentences:

A **ch**ild can **ch**oke on a **ch**unk of **ch**eese.
Chuck paid for the **ch**urch picture by **ch**eck.
Choose the **ch**icken sandwi**ch** for lun**ch**.

Common Spellings	
d	did
dd	ladder

Production of D:

The tip of the tongue is placed behind the upper front teeth on the front end of the gum ridge. The air is stopped briefly at the gum ridge and then released pushing the tongue away, which gives a voiced sound. T is identical but voiceless.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
day	bed	leader
deep	road	president
does	wood	window
decide	need	modern

Contrasting Pairs:

dad/bad	pedal/pebble	drain/train
date/bait	bride/bright	ladle/label
dark/bark	nod/not	bad/bat

Phrases:

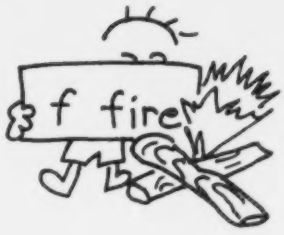
big deal	third degree
down in the dumps	laid an egg
past due	divide the donuts
don't know	good condition
daily dose	under the weather

Sentences:

My **wed**ding **dress** is **old**.
I hear**d** a bir**d** sing **under** my win**dow** to**day**.
The **old** la**dy** **decided** to **do** the laun**dry**.

Common Spellings	
f	fan
ff	offer
gh	laugh
ph	telephone

F



Production of F:

Hold the upper front teeth lightly against the bottom lip, and push air out. F is voiceless. V is identical but voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
fear	giraffe	after
fall	cough	coffee
far	off	laughter
forget	half	careful

Contrasting Pairs:

face/vase	safe/save	half/have
fuse/views	life/live	belief/believe
fail/veil	leaf/leave	fat/pat

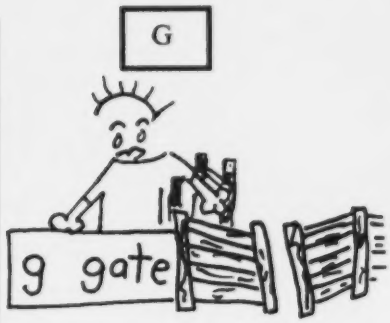
Phrases:

fame and fortune	flow freely
fifty-five feet	fair-weather friends
fat chance	fresh coffee
funny feeling	first place
forget it	photo finish

Sentences:

Fred cou**gh**ed and sni**ff**ed.
Frank **f**ell o**ff** the **f**ront steps into the **f**lower bed.
Professor **F**ranklin **ph**otogra**ph**ed the **f**irefly.

Common Spellings	
g	go
gg	egg
Hard g (g followed by o, a, u)	



Production of G:

The tongue is raised in order to touch the back of the mouth. Air is released quickly, breaking the contact, which produces a voiced sound. K is identical but voiceless.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
got	big	sugar
gave	egg	alligator
guide	dog	muggy
give	bug	igloo

Contrasting Pairs:

good/could	bag/back	grain/crane
goat/coat	dug/duck	glue/clue
guard/card	peg/peck	grow/crow

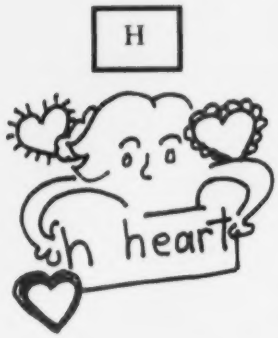
Phrases:

guessing game	figure it out
go get it	green grass
good as gold	get along
give a gift	great suggestion
ground hog	go golfing

Sentences:

The green grass grows in August.
Greg guides the group by the golden gate.
The girl forgot to get sugar and eggs for her grandmother.

Common Spellings	
h	hat
wh	who



Production of H:

Open the mouth and push out a puff of air without vibrating the vocal cords.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(MEDIAL)
had	behind
head	ahead
him	doghouse
home	inhale

Contrasting Pairs:

him/whim	hid/kid	head/fed
hail/whale	horse/course	her/fur
heel/wheel	hill/ill	hat/at

Phrases:

ahead of her	high hopes
happy birthday	have a heart
hurry home	how are you
ho-ho-ho	in the doghouse
head over heels in love	over the hill

Sentences:

Heather is **h**opelessly **h**ead over **h**eels in love.
Harry **h**as a **h**ead of **h**ealthy **h**air.
Have a **h**appy **h**oliday.

J

Common Spellings	
j	joy
dge	bridge
di	soldier
gg	suggest
soft "g" (after g, i, y)	
gi	region
ge	gem
gy	gym

Production of J:

The tip of the tongue touches behind the ridge behind the upper teeth. Lips are pushed out. The sound is voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
general	age	major
joy	bridge	magic
job	edge	subject
giant	judge	danger

Contrasting Pairs:

badge/bash	jet/yet	juice/use
jell/yell	jay/yeah	gin/chin
jest/zest	edge/etch	jeep/cheap

Phrases:

legal age	judge for yourself
general rule	dangerous journey
jump for joy	job hunting
orange juice	college subject
judge and jury	genuine gentleman

Sentences:

George enjoys jokes.
The general and his soldiers jumped off the bridge.
Julie's jewelry is just gorgeous.

Common Spellings	
c	cat
k	kid
cc	account
ch	chaos
ck	pick

K

Production of K:

Raise the back of the tongue to touch the soft part at the back of the roof of the mouth. The air is stopped there, then released quickly. K is voiceless. G is identical but voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
king	sick	quickly
coat	music	mechanic
call	neck	doctor
can	book	discover

Contrasting Pairs:

call/gall	back/bag	clean/glean
curl/girl	bicker/bigger	crow/grow
cold/gold	tucking/tugging	frock/frog

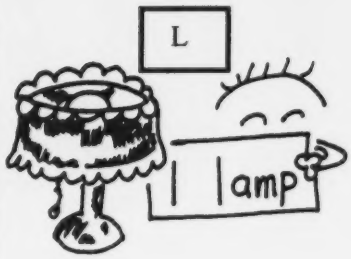
Phrases:

of course	practice makes perfect
call me	cash a check
crystal clear	squeaky clean
well known fact	Christmas card
coffee cake	cook book

Sentences:

Carrying coal is back-breaking work.
The kitchen cook quickly cut a piece of chicken.
Cathy carries both cash and credit cards.

Common Spellings	
l	low
ll	filling



Production of L:

Before vowels, place the tip of the tongue on the upper gum ridge, just behind the teeth. The middle of the tongue is high. After vowels, the back of the tongue is high as the tip of the tongue touches the teeth. L is a voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
let	ill	college
law	all	almost
leave	tell	realize
last	full	silver

Contrasting Pairs:

lock/rock	lay/ray	glass/grass
let/wet	light/right	collect/correct
line/wine	rolling/roaring	late/rate

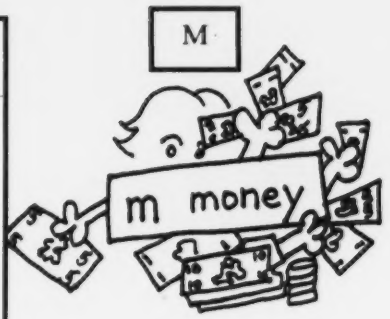
Phrases:

leave me alone	last leg
silver lining	truly wonderful
wall to wall	beautiful smile
lots of luck	whole wide world
rolling in dough	live and let live

Sentences:

"Lilies of the Field" is a classic film.
Michelle has the most beautiful smile in the world.
Laws don't allow pets loose in public places.

Common Spellings	
m	me
mb*	comb
mm	comma
mn*	Autumn



Production of M:

Place lips together. The air flows into the nasal cavity and thus produces a voiced humming sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
met	some	lemon
miss	came	damage
man	him	almost
must	them	example

Contrasting Pairs:

men/when	might/bite	remind/rewind
met/wet	mat/bat	make/wake
mall/ball	more/bore	them/then

Phrases:

wait a minute	M & M's
in the middle	keep it simple
most of all	met my match
make a mess	sometimes I wonder
second attempt	bad example

Sentences:

Mary comes ho**m**e on **M**onday **m**ornings.
Mike and **M**ark **m**ade their ca**m**p near the **m**ountain.
My **m**other **m**akes delicious **m**eat balls and le**m**on **m**eringue pie.

*** common silent letters**

Common Spellings	
n	no
nn	banner
gn*	sign
kn	knot
pn*	pneumonia

Production of N:

The tip of the tongue is raised to the upper gum ridge; the air is pushed into the nasal cavity, sending out a voiced sound through the nose.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
name	in	corner
know	ten	evening
new	sun	danger
none	common	banana

Contrasting Pairs:

no/low	not/dot	dine/dime
knit/lit	near/dear	snack/slack
nice/mice	mine/mile	snow/slow

Phrases:

native country	do not enter
well-known	on the phone
wrong number	turn around
around the corner	not now
count on me	once in a while

Sentences:

No news is good news.
Nick never wears new neckties.
Ned enjoys his New England chowder without any onions.

*** common silent letters**

Common Spellings	
ng	sing
nk*	ink

NG

Production of NG:

The back of the tongue moves toward the back part of the roof of the mouth and touches it firmly, which forces the air to flow into the nasal cavity. This results in a voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
	king	jungle
	long	linger
	among	angry
	coming	tango

Contrasting Pairs:

hung/hum	rung/rug	lung/luck
bang/bag	hang/ham	hang/hand
clang/clam	bang/bank	ring/rig

Phrases:

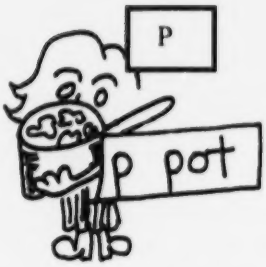
bring it along	single file
among old friends	king of the hill
hang up	long ago
everything looks great	jungle gym
think Spring	young and strong

Sentences:

The **E**n**g**lish lan**g**uage makes me an**g**ry.
The ki**ng** has a sin**g**le ri**ng** on his fin**g**er.
The sin**g**er san**g** son**g**s of Spri**ng**.

*** nk is often added as a variation of this sound.**

Common Spellings	
p	port
pp	supper



Production of P:

Both lips are closed, the air is stopped at the lips, then the lips open. There should be a puff of air that comes out. The sound is voiceless. B is identical but voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
paid	shape	upper
pick	lip	apple
part	top	napkin
pass	hope	deposit

Contrasting Pairs:

pale/bale	tap/tab	rapid/rabid
pat/bat	rope/robe	staple/stable
pit/bit	cap/cab	simple/symbol

Phrases:

peace and prosperity	step up
pay the price	except me
pick up the pace	purple plum
pass the peas	button your lip
piece of paper	powder puff

Sentences:

Pumpkin **p**ie is **p**opular
Peter forgot to **p**repare his re**p**ort.
Newspapers **p**rint **p**olitical **p**ictures.

Common Spellings	
r	red
rr	merry
wr*	write
rh*	rhyme

R

Production of R:

Before vowels, R is produced by raising the tip of the tongue toward the roof the the mouth. The tongue does not touch the roof and does not vibrate. After vowels, the back of the tongue is raised up but does not touch the roof. R is voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
red	bear	zero
real	clear	merry
write	car	several
roof	four	forward

Contrasting Pairs:

rest/west	door/dough	bright/light
rinse/wince	bear/bell	fry/fly
rent/went	run/won	crowd/cloud

Phrases:

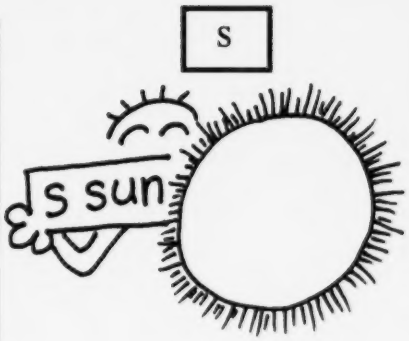
turn of the century	rock and roll
run around	railroad crossing
every other	golden rule
charge card	right and wrong
tried and true	four-door car

Sentences:

Knowing **r**ight from wrong is important.
Gregory and his brother **r**eally like **rock-and-roll** music.
The three friends **r**an in the **r**ace on Thursday, November thirteenth.

***common silent letters**

Common Spellings	
c	race
s	say
z	pretzel
ps*	psalm
sc*	scissors
ss	mass
st*	listen
Soft "c" sound	
ce ci	cy



Production of S:

The tip of the tongue is raised to the upper gum ridge constricting the airstream, producing a sharp "hissing" sound. This is voiceless S sound. Z is identical but voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
set	yes	outside
city	pass	gasoline
sun	kiss	decide
sea	office	glossy

Contrasting Pairs:

some/thumb	tense/tens	loose/lose
sink/think	tense/tenth	lacy/lazy
sue/zoo	close/clothes	rice/rise

Phrases:

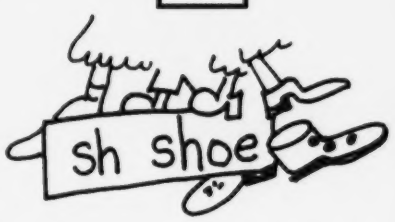
set the standards	first base
sit still	pass the test
sun rise, sun set	sweet sixteen
sail the seven seas	doctor's office
endless supply	slow dance

Sentences:

Sam sails the seven seas.
Students recite an endless supply of silly sentences.
Stop dancing and listen to this song.

* common silent letters

SH



Common Spellings	
c	oceanic
ch	Chicago
s	sugar
ci	special
sc	conscious
sh	shy
si	emulsion
su	sugar
ti	nation

Production of SH:

Push out the lips. The tip of the tongue forms a groove close to the gum ridge but not touching it. Air is pushed out to make a voiceless sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
show	wish	action
she	fresh	issue
shop	wash	special
sure	finish	washing

Contrasting Pairs:

sheep/cheap	shell/sell	cash/catch
sheet/seat	fashion/fasten	marsh/march
ship/sip	shin/chin	dish/ditch

Phrases:

show off	fresh fish
get into shape	short shorts
shop around	cash and carry
ship shape	shine your shoes
shame on you	finish line

Sentences:

She bought a bu**sh**el of deli**ci**ous apples.
Sharon took a vaca**t**ion on the o**ce**an.
The **sh**op had a spe**ci**al on fre**sh**-water fi**sh**ing gear.

Common Spellings	
t	tea
ed	walked
bt*	debt
pt*	receipt
tt	mitt
th	Thomas

Production of T:

The tip of the tongue is placed behind the upper front teeth. Air is stopped briefly at the gum ridge, then released. There should be a puff of air. This produces a voiceless sound. D is identical but voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
take	eat	continue
tell	night	enter
tie	late	until
two	visit	empty

Contrasting Pairs:

tank/thank	try/dry	tree/three
team/theme	debt/dead	true/threw
tick/thick	toot/tooth	right/ride

Phrases:

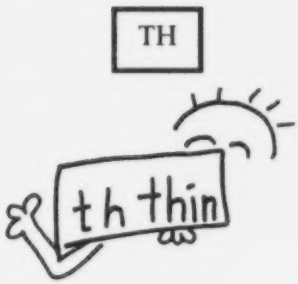
take turns	night light
don't tell	hot temper
too tight	it's important
stand tall	let's eat
tattle tale	twenty-two

Sentences:

Ted's hot temper got him into a fight.
Sometimes Tracy talks too much.
Our computer training material is terrific.

* common silent letters

Common Spellings	
th	think



Production of TH:

Place the tip of the tongue firmly against the cutting edge of the upper front teeth and puff air out. While the air is pushed out, make a voiceless sound without making the vocal cords vibrate. Hint: Have the student exaggerate by sticking the tongue out more than necessary.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
thin	earth	healthy
thank	both	birthday
thought	youth	toothbrush
third	mouth	anthem

Contrasting Pairs:

thin/tin	death/deaf	three/free
through/true	moth/moss	thrill/frill
thirst/first	oath/oat	mouth/mouse

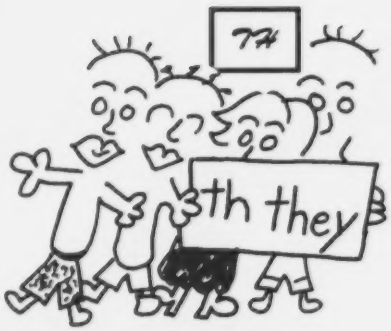
Phrases:

think thin	happy birthday
thank goodness	both of us
well thought out	take a bath
three-thirty	through thick and thin
three in one	healthy diet

Sentences:

I **th**ink **the th**imbles will fit my **th**umb.
He **th**anked bo**th** of us for every**th**ing
Theo's bir**th**day party is on **Th**ursday, **the th**irteen**th**.

Common Spellings	
th	this



Production of th (voiced):

The tip of the tongue is placed against the cutting edge of the upper front teeth. The air is pushed out, making the vocal cords vibrate (a voiced sound). Hint: Have the student exaggerate the sound by sticking the tongue out more than necessary. O is identical but voiceless.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
there	bathe	neither
those	breathe	another
this	smooth	feather
they	soothe	mother

Contrasting Pairs:

there/tear	breathe/breath	worthy/wordy
those/doze	either/ether	other/udder
they/day	teethe/teeth	clothing/closing

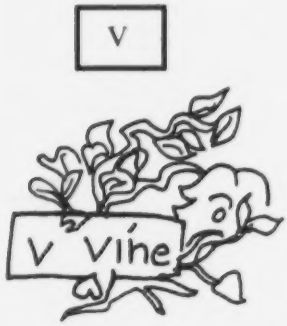
Phrases:

more than that	another one
breathe in deeply	one of these days
this-n-that	those were the days
mother and father	all of these
worthy cause	either one

Sentences:

Neither brother likes this weather.
The father and mother would rather go together.
This leather is better than that one.

Common Spellings	
f	of
v	very



Production of V:

Place the upper front teeth on the bottom lip and push air out (voiced). Hint: Having the student bite lightly down on the lower lip might help. F is identical but voiceless.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
visit	leave	divide
very	give	advance
voice	move	seventeen
view	above	movie

Contrasting Pairs:

view/few	vote/boat	reviews/refuse
vat/bat	wave/waif	relieve/relief
very/berry	shovel/shuffle	leave/leaf

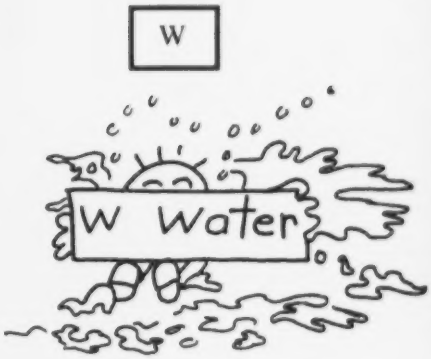
Phrases:

good value	favorite flavor
brief visit	over and above
thank you very much	move over
voice your opinion	love of my life
divided evenly	old wives' tale

Sentences:

Love me or leave me.
Every November eleventh is Veteran's Day.
Very careful drivers avoid swerving into curves.

Common Spellings	
w	way
u	persuade
ui	quiet
wh*	white



Production of W:

Push the lips forward and blow out air to produce a voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
will	meow	always
way	ow	forward
were		sandwich
water		homework

Contrasting Pairs:

why/rye	west/vest	wine/vine
wet/vet	way/ray	wipe/ripe
wise/rise	wait/rate	wheel/veal*

Phrases:

will power	weeping willow
wash and wear	don't dwell on it
woodwork	within reasons
homework	one way
watch your step	in the whole wide world

Sentences:

Wash and **w**ear is **w**onderful.
The **W**inter **w**ind blows from the **W**est.
We won't **w**ait for **W**illy on **W**ednesday.

* Some people pronounce the wh sound with an "h" puff of air. "Which" and "witch" for example sound differently when spoken this way.

Common Spellings	
y	yes
ia	Italian
ni	opinion

Y

Production of Y:

The lips are spread. The front of the tongue is raised toward the roof of the mouth and the tip of the tongue is behind the lower teeth. This produces a voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(MEDIAL)
yes	onion
yard	canyon
young	million
year	opinion

Contrasting Pairs:

yell/jell	yam/jam	you/chew
yolk/joke	you'll/jewel	yellow/jello
yard/jarred	yet/jet	yes/chess

Phrases:

yard sale	beyond control
young and old	a million to one
year after year	yours truly
valued opinion	yellow yarn
not yet	pearl onion

Sentences:

Yellow onions and yams are yummy.
The canyon is one million years old.
Union soldiers were often young.

Common Spellings	
z	zone
zz	buzz
s	was

Z

Production of Z:

Raise the tip of the tongue to the upper gum ridge, then vibrate the vocal chords by making a buzzing voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
zebra	twins	daisy
zipper	eyes	closed
zoo	rose	pleasing
zinc	please	razor
		fuzzy

Contrasting Pairs:

closed/close	rise/rice	razor/racer
plays/place	zoo/Sue	peas/peace
graze/grace	trays/trace	prize/price

Phrases:

zigzag	closed down
close your eyes	razor sharp
a dozen roses	fizzled out
grows like a weed	raisin bread
easy does it	fingers and toes

Sentences:

Zebras are always grazing at the zoo.
Roses and daisies blow in the breeze.
Zak uses his razor on his fuzzy face.

ZH

Common Spellings	
si	vision
zi	glazier
su	pleasure
ge	beige

Production of ZH:

Push out the lips. Raise the front of the tongue to the upper gum ridge making a voiced buzzing sound. Sh is identical but voiced.

Words:

(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
beige	vision
rouge	measure
garage	leisure
massage	usually

Contrasting Pairs:

measure/mesher

Phrases:

red rouge	clear vision
parking garage	beyond measure
beige color	at your leisure
usually right	business or pleasure
watching television	hidden treasure

Sentences:

We usually treasure pleasurable trips.
His decision usually causes confusion.
Watching television is a leisure activity.

NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS, DELETIONS, AND SIMPLIFICATIONS

w/wh Some linguists classify these as tow sounds. Some people pronounce which and witch differently.

qu Since "q" is always followed by a "u" in English, this becomes a "kw" combination. Practice these words:

quiet	queen
quick	quiver
quilt	quit

x "x" at the beginning of words is almost always pronounced as "z" in English. Some linguists classify medial "x" as a different sound. It is a combination of g/s or k/s. Practice these words:

extra (ks)	external (ks)	example)gs)
excited (ks)	excellent (ks)	exact (gs)
	excuse (ks)	exhausted (gs)

ar "A" combined with "r" is sometimes classified as a separate sound (a as in arm). It is very similar to a short o/r combination. Practice these words:

arm	artificial
army	artery
article	ark
art	party

$\overline{oo}$ is sometimes classified separately from the long u sound.

cute	vs.	boot
(yoo)		(oo)

LINGUISTIC INTERFERENCE

Introduction

ESL teachers are continually coping with the problem of acceptable, understandable pronunciation from students. They need to understand why Peter from Poland cannot say "th", or why John from Hungary is saying "v", when they are attempting to teach him to say "w". ESL teachers can avoid much frustration if they are made aware of the basic linguistic interference that students bring from their native languages. This interference includes pronunciation, syntax, and grammar. If teachers are aware of the interference they can, in many cases, find alternatives and improve student pronunciation dramatically.

An example of this occurs with students whose native language is Spanish. They do not think they can pronounce words like "this" or "thirteen"; however, that sound **DOES** occur in the Spanish language. The problem is that it is not used at the beginning of words, but at the end of words. When Spanish-speaking students are made aware that they do have that sound in their language, their pronunciation improves immediately.

Another example is in word placement for dates and addresses. In many languages, the date is given with the number first, the month second, and the year last. Similarly, an address is given with the house number first followed by the name of the street, and the zip code followed by the city. Although this linguistic interference is difficult to change, the awareness of the problem is helpful to the ESL teacher.

The problem becomes most difficult when the English sound does not occur in the students' native language at all; however, frustrations can be eased when the ESL teacher is at least aware of these problems.

The following explanation of some of the basic linguistic interference is an attempt to simplify the complicated job of the ESL teacher.

ARABIC

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Arabic uses a non-Roman script alphabet. Reading and writing are from right to left. Traditionally, a book will be opened from the left.

2. Both nouns and adjectives have articles.

3. Adjectives follow nouns. The brown shoes > the shoes the brown.

4. Although accent varies in Arabic speaking countries, the language will be generally understood by educated Arabs.

5. Verb phrases do not occur in Arabic.

6. Since vowels are not written separately in Arabic, they may be left out when an ESL student attempts to write in English. In many cases, street > strt; dress > drs, etc.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. The **R** is formed in the front of the mouth, and it is trilled or rolled.

2. The aspirated **P** as in put does not exist. The sound will resemble a **B** sound. Paper > baber.

3. The **TH** sound does not exist in Arabic.

   a. Voiceless initial **TH** will be replaced with **S**. thin > sin.

   b. Voiced initial **TH** will be replaced with **Z** or **D**. that > zat or dat.

4. The aspirated **T** will sound more like **D**. too > doo.

5. **CH** does not exist. It is replaced by **SH**. cheep > sheep.

6. There is no hard **G** as in go. The **G** is always soft as in gentle.

7. The short vowel sounds can cause difficulties for the ESL learner.

CHINESE

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. There are various styles of writing and reading in Chinese.

   a. The old, traditional style is written and read in vertical columns, top to bottom, right to left. The front of the book is on the left.

   b. The new style is written and read horizontally from left to right.

2. Characters are used in place of a phonetic alphabet.

3. Chinese is a tonal language; different tones give different meanings to words. Rhythm and stress can cause problems for ESL students.

4. Chinese is made up of one-syllable words. This can cause much difficulty in the comprehension of long English words.

5. Articles are optional.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Consonant clusters are rare in Chinese. Since English has many of them, this can create pronunciation problems for the ESL student.

2. The **TH** sound does not exist.

   a. Voiceless TH will be replaced by **T** or **F**.
   think > tink or fink

   b. Voiced TH will be replaced by **D** or **V**.
   that > dat or vat

3. The L and R sounds are difficult to produce since students cannot distinguish the difference between the two sounds. Some will always use "R" for both sounds, while others will always use "L."
   glass > grass or grass > glass
   blew > brew or brew > blew

4. In the initial position a sound resembling **L** will usually replace an **R**.
   road > load

5. Chinese has no **Z** sound. It is replaced with **SH** or **S**.
   zip > ship or sip

CROATIAN, SERBIAN

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Croatian and Serbian form two of the four main languages from this area in Europe. They include many dialects and variations in pronunciation and grammar.

2. Croatian uses the Roman alphabet, while Serbian uses the Cyrillic alphabet.

3. Nouns, pronouns, and adjectives must agree in gender (masculine, feminine, or neuter).

4. Verb endings are used in place of pronouns.

5. There are no articles.

6. In a sentence, expressions of time and place occur according to their importance within the context of that sentence.

7. Irregular verbs may be difficult. Perfect tenses will be unfamiliar in meaning.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Voiced and voiceless **TH** do not exist. Students will tend to pronounce these sounds as **D** or **T**.
   both > bod or bot; these > dese or tese

2. The short English vowel sounds are very difficult. Generally, the student tends not to hear the slight variations in these sounds.

3. The letter **R** is rolled.

4. The letter **W** does not exist. It is replaced by **V** or **F**.
   want > vant or fant

5. In many cases **V** > **B**, **C** > **S**, and **X** > **H**.
   vat > bat; cold > sold; Texas > Tehas

CZECH

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Nouns as well as adjectives have gender (masculine, feminine, and neuter).
2. The endings on the words signify the gender, the person, and the tense.
3. Articles are not used.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. **W** is replaced with a **V** sound.
   want > vant
2. **Y**, when used as a vowel, is a long "**E**" sound.
   symbol > s**ee**mbol
3. **J** is a **Y** sound.
   January > Yanuary
4. The **TH** sound does not exist.
   a. Voiceless initial **TH** becomes **T**.
      think > tink
   b. Voiced initial **Th** becomes **D**.
      these > dese
   c. Voiceless final **TH** becomes **F**, **S**, or **T**.
      with > wif, wis, or wit
   d. Voiced middle **TH** becomes **D**.
      mother > modder
5. Final **G** is replaced by **K**.
   pig > pik
6. Final **D** is replaced by **T**.
   bad > bat

FARSI (PERSIAN)

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. The alphabet is made up of script which resembles Arabic.

2. Reading and writing are from right to left.

3. Nouns are followed by adjectives.

4. Nouns and pronouns have no gender. The word for **he** and **she** are the same.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Farsi lacks some of the letters/sounds that occur in the English alphabet. They include **O**, **Q**, **U**, **W**, and **X**. This can cause much difficulty in pronunciation.

2. Initial voiceless **Th** becomes **T** or **S**.
think > tink or sink

3. The sound **W** is replaced by **V**.
want > vant

4. Final **D** becomes **T**.
bad > bat

5. Initial **G** may be replaced by **C**.
goat > coat

6. Short vowels will be difficult.

FRENCH

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. The rhythm in French is different from English, because the stress on words falls near or on the last syllable. English tends to stress the front syllables in connected speech patterns.

2. All nouns in French are masculine or feminine. Since "pencil" is masculine, its corresponding pronoun is "he." Since the noun "pen" is feminine, its corresponding pronoun is "she."

3. Adjectives and articles agree in gender and number with the noun they modify. Generally, descriptive adjectives follow the noun.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. The **Th** sound does not occur in French.

   a. Voiceless initial **TH** becomes **S**.
   think > sink

   b. Voiced initial **TH** becomes **Z**.
   them > zem

2. The **CH** sound does not occur in French. It is replaced with **SH**.
   cheek > sheek

3. The sound of **J** as in "jeep" does not occur in French. It has the sound of "rouge".

4. The **R** sound is difficult. Many French speakers substitute the **R** made at the back of the throat - a "growled" sound. Some will substitute the trilled **R**.

5. **ING** as in "ring" does not occur. Ring may become rin.

6. Final **S** is not pronounced, and final **T** after a vowel is also not pronounced.

7. **P**, **T**, and **K** are not aspirated. They sound more like **B**, **D**, and **G** respectively.
   cap > cab; bat > bad; back > bag

GERMAN

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. The rhythm and word stress in German are similar to English.

2. Word order can be very different from English, especially in a complex sentence where inverted word order occurs. An English sentence like "I will go downtown tomorrow " will become "Tomorrow will I downtown go ", in German.

3. Nouns, articles, and possessive adjectives are declined.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. The **TH** sound does not occur in German.

   a. Voiceless initial **TH** will usually be replaced by **S**.
   think > sink

   b. Voiced initial **TH** will usually be replaced by **Z**.
   that > zat

2. **W** has the sound of **V** in German.
   want > vant

3. The letter **S** is difficult for Germans.

   a. **S** before a vowel becomes **Z**.
   so > zo

   b. **S** followed by **P**, **T**, or **L** becomes **SH**.
   spell > shpell; step > shtep; sleep > shleep

4. When **B**, **D**, or **G** occur at the end of an English word, the ESL student will usually use **P**, **T**, or **K** respectively.
   cab > cap; bad > bat; bag > back

5. The **R** sound can be difficult. In German, the **R** is made at the back of the throat and has a "growled" sound.

HINDI

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Hindi uses a non-Roman script alphabet.
2. Hindi is written and read from left to right.
3. Various letters/sounds in the Hindi alphabet have no English equivalents.
4. Sentences are written with the subject first, sentence parts in the middle, and the verb last.
5. Helping verbs such as "to be" are not usually used in Hindi.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Voiced and voiceless **TH** becomes **T**.
   three > tree, think > tink
2. The sound **P** is replaced by **B**.
   pig > big
3. The sound **W** becomes **V**.
   want > vant
4. The sound **CH** becomes **SH**.
   cheep > sheep
5. Final consonants are often omitted, especially the **G** from **NG**.
   doing > doin
6. Short vowel sounds cause much difficulty, since the ESL student does not hear the slight variations.
7. The consonants **F**, **Q**, **V**, **X**, and **Z** do not exist as separate characters in the Hindi alphabet.

HMONG

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. The alphabet uses Roman letters, and is written and read from left to right.

2. There are seven voice tones in Hmong. These voice tones give meaning and expression to the words in the language.

3. Usually only the present tense is used.

4. Nouns are not pluralized. The quantitative word before the noun indicates the plural idea. One girl, two girl, many girl.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Initial **B** and **P** have the same sound.
   bad > bad; pad > bad

2. The **TH** sound causes difficulty.

   a. Initial voiceless **TH** becomes **T**.
   think > tink

   b. Initial voiced **TH** becomes **D**.
   that > dat

3. The sound of **T** in the middle of a word will become **D**.
   better > bedder

4. The consonants **P**, **T**, and **K** in the final position are replaced with **B**, **D**, and **G** respectively, and become voiced.
   hip > hib; hit > hid; sick > sig

HUNGARIAN

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. The sentence word order is basically the same as in English.

2. The Roman alphabet is used.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Some Hungarian vowel sounds have no English equivalents.

2. There is no sound for **W** in Hungarian. It is replaced with a **V** sound.
   want > vant

3. The letter **J** has a **Y** sound.
   January > Yanuary

4. The **TH** sound causes difficulty in Hungarian.

   a. Voiceless initial **TH** becomes **S** or **T**.
      think > sink or tink

   b. Voiced initial **TH** becomes **Z** or **D**.
      that > zat or dat

5. The letter **R** is trilled or rolled.

JAPANESE

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Japanese uses three writing systems. Two sets of characters are used for most written material and are written in vertical columns read from right to left.

   The third system is written horizontally and read from left to right. It is phonetic and is used for adding foreign words to the language.

2. In Japanese, the subject is generally followed by other sentence parts, and the verb is last (subject, object, verb).

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. The letter **C** may be pronounced as **SH**.
   cent > shent

2. The sound **W** is replaced by **V**.
   want > vant

3. Initial **V** becomes **B**.
   vine > bine

4. The **TH** sound does not occur in Japanese.

   a. Initial voiceless **TH** becomes **S**.
      think > sink

   b. Initial voiced **TH** becomes **D**.
      these > dese

   c. Final **TH** becomes **S**.
      with > wis

5. The **L** sound is usually replaced by an **R** type sound.
   led > red

KOREAN

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Korean is related to Chinese and Japanese, but it has its own alphabet.

2. Traditionally Korean was written and read vertically; the more modern style is horizontal.

3. In a Korean sentence, the order is generally subject, other sentence parts, and the verb last. The word order in English is usually subject, verb, and object(s).

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. The **TH** sound does not occur in Korean.

   a. Initial **TH** becomes **D**.
   think > dink; that > dat

   b. Final voiceless **TH** is replaced with **S**.
   with > wis

   c. Final voiced **TH** becomes **D**.
   smooth > smood

2. The sound **L** is usually replaced with an **R** sound.
   led > red

3. The sound **B** becomes **V**.
   bat > vat

4. The **J** sound becomes a **Z** sound.
   jeep > zeep

5. The **H** or **WH** sounds become an **F** sound.
   held > feld; white > fight

POLISH

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Nouns are feminine, masculine, or neuter; they are declined like Latin/German nouns.

2. Adjectives are also declined; they must agree in number and gender with the nouns.

3. There are three basic verb tenses; present, past, and future. Verbs are conjugated, so subject pronouns are not necessary.

4. There are no articles in Polish.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. In the initial position, the letter **J** will always sound like a **Y**.
   January > Yanuary

2. There is no **TH** sound in Polish.

   a. Initial voiceless **TH** can become **T** or **F**.
   three > tree or free

   b. Initial voiced **TH** usually becomes **D**.
   that > dat

   c. Final **TH** can be replaced by **S** or **T**.
   with > wis or wit

3. The letter **W** becomes **V**.
   want > vant

4. Since Polish has several sounds for **L**, it is hard for students to produce the English **L**.

PORTUGUESE

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Nouns are masculine, feminine, or neuter and are shown by the article and the ending on the noun.

2. Possessive pronouns and adjectives must agree in gender and number with the nouns they modify.

3. Descriptive adjectives usually follow the noun.

4. No helping verbs are used to form questions. Instead, the verb is placed in front of the subject (inverted).

5. All vowels are pronounced.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. **CH** will sound like **SH**.
   cheep > sheep

2. The letter **H** is never pronounced.

3. Since Portuguese has many nasal sounds, this may cause the ESL student some problems in pronunciation.

RUSSIAN

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Russian uses the Cyrillic alphabet.

2. Nouns have feminine, masculine, or neuter genders.

3. Nouns and adjectives are declined as in Latin/German. All nouns and adjectives must agree in gender and number.

4. There are fewer verb tenses in Russian than in English.

5. There are no articles in Russian.

6. The verb "to be" is almost never used in the present tense.
   The car is red > car red.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. English short vowel sounds are very difficult.

2. There is no **TH** sound in Russian.

   a. Voiceless initial **TH** becomes **S**.
      think > sink

   b. Voiced initial **TH** becomes **Z**.
      that > zat

   c. Voiceless final **TH** becomes **F**, **S**, **Z**, or **T**.
      with > wif, wis, wiz, wit

   d. Middle **TH** becomes **Z**.
      father > fazer

3. There is no **W** sound in Russian. It is replaced by the **V** sound.
   want > vant

4. The letter **R** is rolled or "growled" at the back of the throat.

5. A hard **G** sound replaces the letter **H** in foreign words.
   Ohio > Ogio

SPANISH

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Usually descriptive adjectives follow the nouns they modify.

2. Adjectives and articles must agree in gender and number with the nouns they modify.

3. There is no neuter in Spanish. Since the word "car" is masculine, its corresponding pronoun is "he." Since the word "pen" is feminine, its corresponding pronoun is "he."

4. In a question or an exclamation, the punctuation both precedes AND follows the statement: ¡ . . ! ¿ . . ?

5. All vowels are pronounced.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. There are no voiceless consonant blends beginning with "S"; consequently, an "e" sound will precede these blends.
   street > estreet; school > eschool

2. There is no **SH** sound. It becomes **CH**.
   shoe > choe

3. The letters **R** and **RR** are formed in the front of the mouth and are trilled.

4. The letter **H** has no sound. The letter **J** always carries the **H** sound as does **G** before the vowels **E** or **I**.

5. The sound **TH** exists in Spanish, but the letters **TH** are never used together. **D** will have the **TH** sound wherever possible in a Spanish sentence. In Spanish, **Z** and **C** (before **E** or **I**) carry the sound **TH**.

6. In many cases **V** will sound like a soft **B** sound.
   have > hab

TAGALOG (FILIPINO)

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. 300 years of Spanish control had an effect on the language. It is written and read horizontally from left to right, and it uses the Roman alphabet.

2. The sentence structure resembles English.

3. Tagalog uses three tenses - present, past, and future.

4. ESL students may be able to pronounce English well and quickly, even though their comprehension may still be poor.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. The letter **V** has a **B** sound.
   vest > best; vat > bat

2. The letter **J** has a **Y** sound.
   jam > yam

3. **S** and **Z** have the **S** sound.
   zip > sip; zebra > sebra

4. All words ending in TAIN have the same sound as the ending of the word "maintain."
   fountain > fountain

5. The **TH** sound is difficult.

   a. Voiceless initial **TH** sounds like **T**.
      think > tink

   b. Voiced initial **TH** sounds like **D**.
      these > dese

   c. Final **TH** sounds like **T**.
      tooth > toot

6. The letter F has a P sound.
   fan > pan

THAI

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. In Thai, a script-like alphabet is used instead of the Roman alphabet. Writing and reading are done from left to right.

2. There are five voice tones in the Thai language; each tone changes the meaning of the word.

3. Nouns have no plural forms. This concept is conveyed, instead, through the use of quantitative words which follow the nouns.
   six pencils > pencil six; two children > child two

4. Adjectives follow nouns.

5. There is no apostrophe. An "of" phrase shows possession.
   My mother's hat > the hat of my mother.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Voiced final consonants in English are omitted. Multiple final consonant clusters are impossible.

2. Voiceless consonant blends at the beginning of English words are difficult. ESL students will tend to voice them.
   stop > sadop; spend > sabend

3. The **TH** sound does not exist in the Thai language.
   a. Voiceless initial **TH** becomes **T**.
      three > tree
   b. Voiced initial **TH** becomes **D**.
      that > dat
   c. Voiceless final **TH** becomes **T**.
      with > wit

4. The letter **V** has a **W** sound.
   visit > wisit

5. The letters **R** and **L** are interchanged because they sound the same.
   free > flee; fly > fry

6. **CH** sounds like **SH**.
   cheep > sheep

TURKISH

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. The Roman alphabet is used in Turkish.

2. Writing and reading are done from left to right.

3. Turkish and English have many similar consonant sounds. There are very few difficulties in this area.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. There are no initial consonant clusters in Turkish. The most difficult to learn are those beginning with **S**. ESL students will insert a vowel before or after the **S**.
   store > istore or sitore

2. The **TH** sound does not occur in Turkish.

   a. Voiceless initial **TH** becomes **S** or **T**.
   thin > sin or tin

   b. Voiced **TH** becomes **Z** or **D**.
   that > zat or dat

3. The letters **V** and **W** are confusing. **V** is especially difficult to produce before vowels. **W** is replaced by **oo** as in noon.
   white > ooite

4. Words ending in **B**, **D**, or **G** will be substituted with **P**, **T**, or **K** respectively.
   nab > nap; lid > lit; pig > pik

5. Where **P**, **T**, or **K** occur in the middle of a word, **B**, **D**, or **G** will be substituted.
   dipper > dibber; butter > budder; bicker > bigger

VIETNAMESE

A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Vietnamese differs from many Asian languages because it uses the Roman alphabet, and it is written and read from left to right.

2. There are six voice tones in the Vietnamese language, and all words are monosyllabic.

3. Vietnamese is patterned like Spanish and Portuguese in syntax, vowel usage, and word order; adjectives follow nouns.

4. There are no plural noun endings.

B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Pronunciation may be choppy for ESL students because the English language has so many words of more than one syllable.

2. The **TH** sound is difficult.

   a. Voiceless initial **TH** can become **T** or **S**.
   think > tink or sink

   b. Voiced initial **TH** can become **Z**.
   that > zat

3. **CH** has the **Sh** sound.
   cheep > sheep

4. The **L** can have the sound of **R**.
   load > road

5. The letter **D** is confusing. It may be replaced by **J**, **Y**, or **Z**.
   dig > zig, jig > yig or zig

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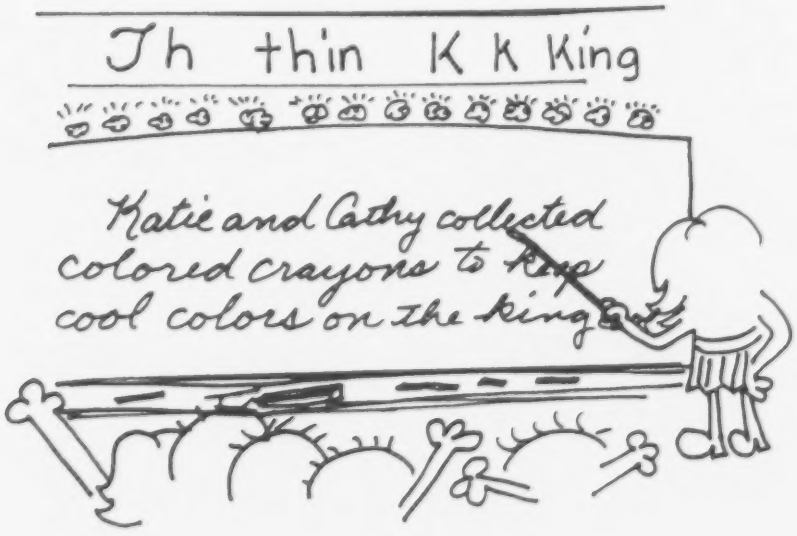
INTRODUCTION

Practice Sentences

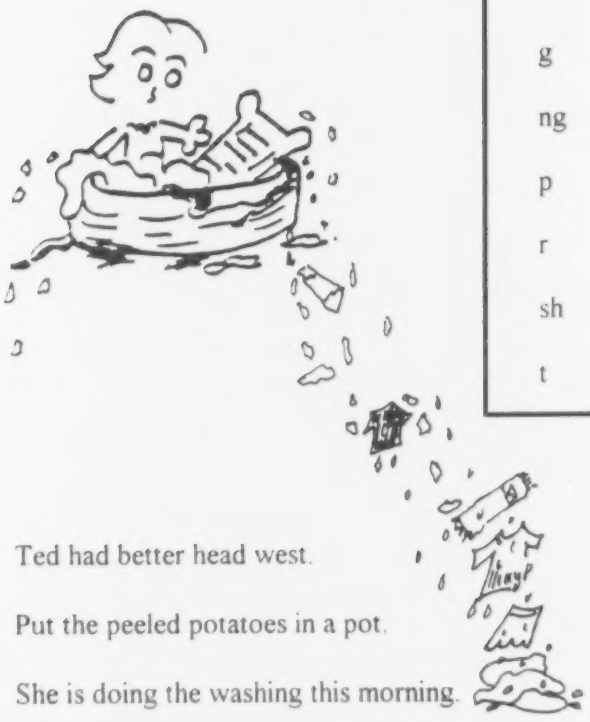
These sentences were designed to give the student practice in saying the English sounds that are most difficult coming from his native language background. There are also twenty general practice sentences at the end for a little tongue twister fun and challenge. Students almost universally have difficulty with th (thin), th (these) and short vowels.



ARABIC

Difficult Sounds

ch	(chin)	th	(thin)
g	(go)	*th*	(then)
ng	(ring)	a	(man)
p	(pot)	e	(egg)
r	(red)	i	(sit)
sh	(ship)	o	(hot)
t	(ten)	u	(up)



1. Ted had better head west.
2. Put the peeled potatoes in a pot.
3. She is doing the washing this morning.
4. The boys enjoy their toys.
5. It's a pleasure to meet you.
6. Richard is roller skating with Chuck this Thursday.
7. Gigantic garlic and green grapes grow in the garden.
8. I sing songs every evening in Spring.
9. The three brothers' birthdays are this month.
10. Charlie's dishes were chipped when they arrived at the china shop.

CHINESE

Difficult Sounds

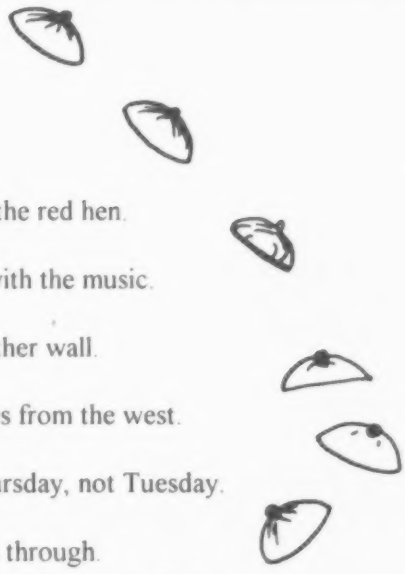
d	(dog)
l	(lip)
r	(red)
th	(thin)
th	(then)
z	(zoo)

1. This is the thigh bone.
2. Rory ran a race.
3. I have a very bad headache.
4. The garden grows bigger in August.
5. Paul has ham and scrambled eggs for breakfast.
6. Harry has half a hamburger.
7. Jack usually drinks orange juice in the morning.
8. Measure the beige garage.
9. There are thousands of these things to think about.
10. She sells seashells by the seashore.

CROATIAN/SERBIAN

Difficult Sounds

c	(cent) always soft	a	(man)
r	(red)	e	(egg)
th	(thin)	i	(sit)
th	(then)	o	(hot)
w	(water)	u	(up)



1. Zach has a black cat.
2. We got the best egg from the red hen.
3. Max hums happily along with the music.
4. Put the poster up on the other wall.
5. In winter, the wind whistles from the west.
6. Both boxes arrived on Thursday, not Tuesday.
7. Thelma thinks these things through.
8. Please put the lid on that pot.
9. They stopped and picked up better vegetables.
10. They met the photographer at the theater.

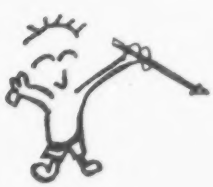
IV - 3

CZECH

Difficult Sounds

d	(dog)
g	(game)
j	(jet)
th	(thin)
th	(then)
w	(water)

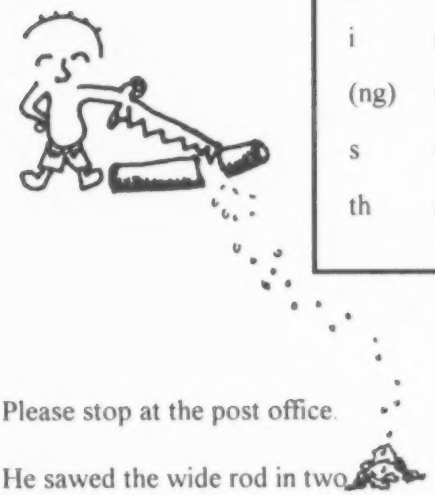
1. The fat cat sat on Father's hat.
2. Let the yellow Jell-O set.
3. Which way will Willy wander?
4. Ted had said that Fred was in bed with a cold.
5. The dog dug at the frog in the bag.
6. Just the edge of the page was damaged.
7. "Dad," "father" and "pa" mean the same thing.
8. Jimmy saw the vet get the dog wet.
9. Stuffed turkey is a favorite for Thanksgiving.
10. Thelma thinks these thighs are thin.



FARSI

Difficult Sounds

d	(bad)	final		*th*	(then)
g	(game)	initial		w	(water)
i	(sit)			e	(egg)
(ng)	(ring)			o	(hot)
s	(sad) plus other consonants			u	(up)
th	(thin)				

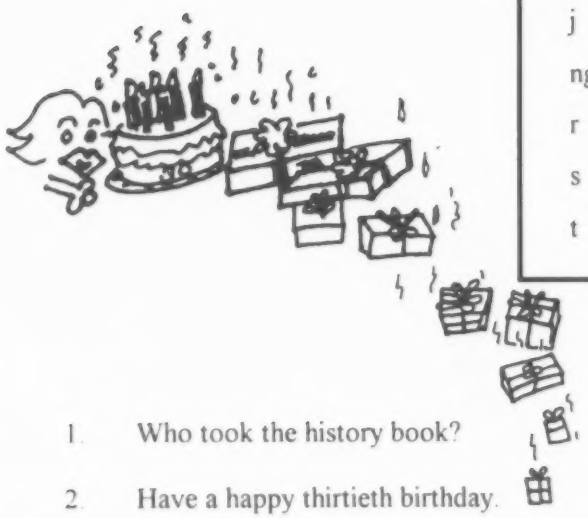


1. Please stop at the post office.
2. He sawed the wide rod in two.
3. He will have a wonderful voyage.
4. Gary, hold out your hand.
5. She saw a school of cod under the net.
6. Wayne wants Willy to wait with Wendy.
7. This Thursday is Heather's third birthday.
8. Gail gave me a great gift before Gary did.
9. They're both wearing gold wedding rings on their fingers.
10. Did Bob find a big bug under the bed?

FRENCH

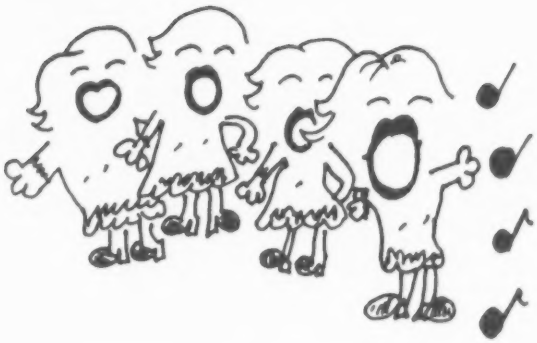
Difficult Sounds

ch	(chin)	t	(tent) final
h	(hand)	th	(thin)
j	(jet)	*th*	(then)
ng	(ring)	e	(egg)
r	(red)	i	(sit)
s	(pots) final	u	(up)
t	(jacket) final after vowel		



1. Who took the history book?
2. Have a happy thirtieth birthday.
3. George is a judge.
4. The boys enjoy their choice of toys.
5. Would you tell us how long the line is?
6. Swimming and sailing are enjoyable things.
7. Charles cashes his check each Thursday.
8. Thelma thinks these things through.
9. Susan thanked him for the theater tickets.
10. Jack usually chooses orange juice and vegetables for lunch.

GERMAN



Difficult Sounds

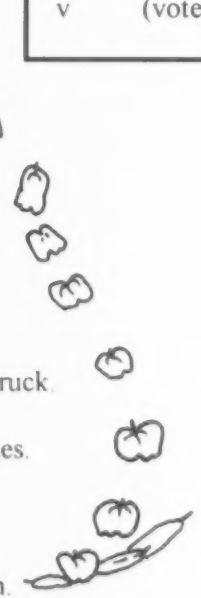
b, d, g	(tab, bad, bag) final
ng	(ring)
s	(sad) plus vowels
s	(spot, stop, slow) plus p, t, l
th	(thin)
th	(then)
w	(water)

1. John is going swimming.
2. This was Steve's razor.
3. Join the youth group.
4. Slowly step on to the street.
5. Which way will we walk?
6. The women's choir is singing with the ringing bells.
7. The coach watched the Chargers score a touchdown.
8. Does her apartment have three bedrooms and a bath?
9. Heather says there are three zeroes in one thousand.
10. Mr. Smith slowly scraped snow from his window.

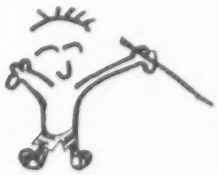
HINDI

Difficult Sounds

ch	(chin)	w	(water)
f	(foot)	x	(extra)
ng	(ring)	a	(man)
p	(pot)	e	(egg)
q	(queen)	i	(sit)
th	(thin)	o	(hot)
th	(then)	u	(up)
v	(vote)		



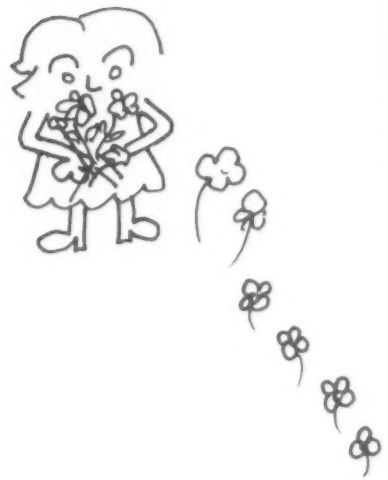
1. Peter picked purple plums.
2. Frank fixes fine furniture.
3. Bring the ping pong ball.
4. Set those three thick tree trunks on the truck.
5. Chelsea shouldn't choose chocolate shakes.
6. Which show will we watch?
7. Put the pot of peppers on the back porch.
8. Martha thoroughly thought these things through.
9. I wouldn't want to wear wool in warm weather.
10. Does he pet the cat on the head or the back?



HMONG

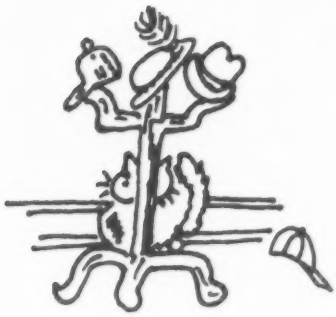
Difficult Sounds

b	(boy)	th	(thin)
d	(dog)	*dh*	(then)
d	(bed) final	w	(water)
k	(kind)	a	(man)
k	(sack) final	e	(egg)
p	(pot)	i	(sit)
p	(map) final	o	(hot)
t	(ten)	u	(up)
t	(pet) final		



1. Cats are the best pets.
2. Elizabeth won three prizes.
3. What size is the garage?
4. I will leave at twelve o'clock.
5. Bob read the paper to Dick.
6. The weather is bad through the winter.
7. I rarely go there.
8. Bring the broom into the other room.
9. Beth gave me big blue violets.
10. Bob said he would take a walk this evening.

HUNGARIAN



Difficult Sounds

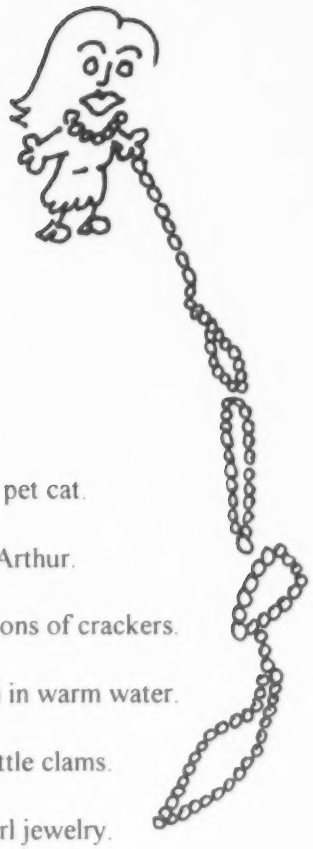
j	jet	a	(saw)
r	(red)	e	(egg)
th	(thin)	i	(sit)
th	(then)	o	(hot)
w	(water)	u	(up)
a	(man)	u	(cute)

1. Jane jumps for joy.
2. This leather is smooth.
3. Which way is Washington?
4. Matthew has three brothers.
5. Park Jerry's car near the yard.
6. Have you used these new running shoes?
7. Robert rode the red raft in the river.
8. That fat cat sat at the back of that very hat rack.
9. Willy wondered why Warren's watch was wet.
10. Thelma thoroughly thanked thirty thin weathermen.

JAPANESE

Difficult Sounds

c	(cent)
l	(lip)
r	(red)
th	(thin)
th	(then)
v	(vote)
w	(water)



1. Matt sat near the pet cat.
2. That thin man is Arthur.
3. Carol carries cartons of crackers.
4. We want to wash in warm water.
5. Gil likes lots of little clams.
6. Cheryl wears pearl jewelry.
7. Sue said she sees the sailboat in the center of the sea.
8. Ruth's thirteenth birthday is April third.
9. Valerie ran to the grocery store for celery.
10. The doctor urged her to leave work early.

IV - 11

KOREAN

Difficult Sounds

b	(boy)
h	(hope)
j	(jet)
l	(lip)
r	(read)
th	(thin)
th	(then)
w	(water)

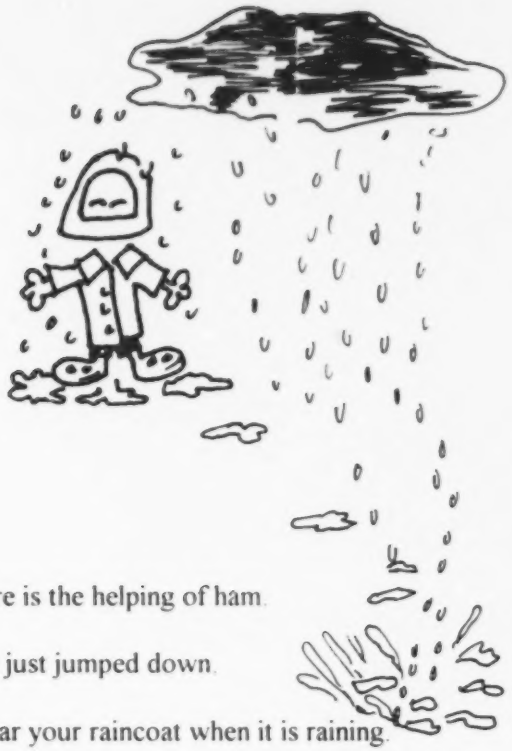
1. Show me the saw.
2. Let's all listen.
3. Barbara's baby boy is beautiful.
4. Those three men are his brothers.
5. Larry plays Little League baseball.
6. Jeb just jumped into the jeep.
7. The heavy handle hit Harold's head.
8. The willow leans slightly to the left.
9. Blend blueberries and butter in the batter.
10. Jan's car is parked near the curb on Brown Drive.

POLISH

Difficult Sounds

j	(jet)	i	(mile)
th	(thin)	o	(hot)
ch	(then)	oo	(boot)
w	(water)	u	(cute)
a	(take)		

1. Tom lost the golf ball.
2. Willy wants to whistle.
3. Put shoes and boots in your new suitcase.
4. I like white rice.
5. Jean easily eats green peas.
6. This pitcher is filled with chilled milk.
7. She wears a single ring on her finger.
8. Matthew's thumb thoroughly throbs.
9. Wash the windows with warm water.
10. Lillian leaned lightly against the little ladder.



PORTUGUESE

Difficult Sounds

ch	(chin)
h	(hand)
l	(tell) final
r	(red)

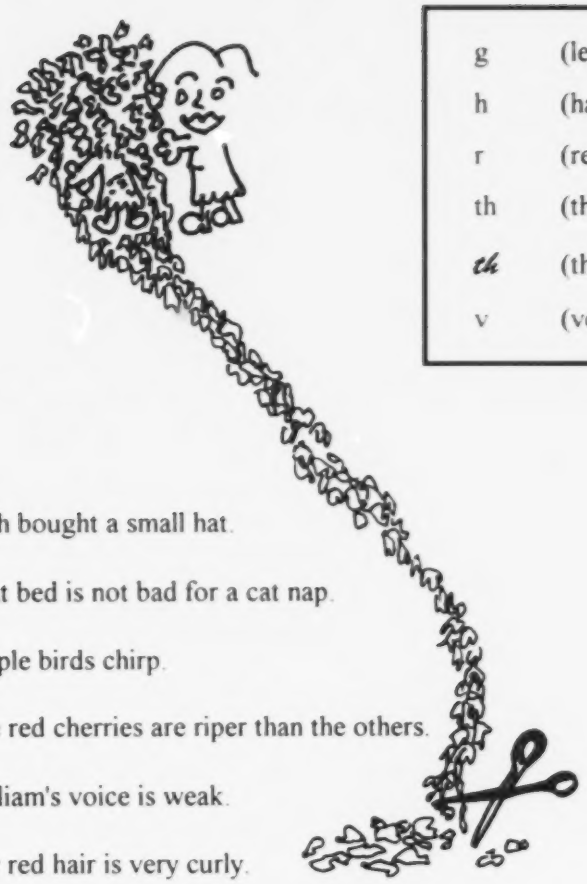
1. Here is the helping of ham.
2. Jim just jumped down.
3. Wear your raincoat when it is raining.
4. This Thursday is the third of the month.
5. Did Charles choose cherry or chocolate cheesecake?
6. There are swirls of curls in her brown hair.
7. Jed picked baskets of peaches each morning.
8. This big ship slips into the mist.
9. He has hot dogs and hamburgers on holidays.
10. The teacher watches each child choose their lunch.

IV - 14

RUSSIAN

Difficult Sounds

g	(leg) voiced final consonants		
h	(hand)	w	(water)
r	(red)	a	(man)
th	(thin)	e	(egg)
th	(then)	i	(sit)
v	(vote)	o	(hot)



1. Beth bought a small hat.
2. That bed is not bad for a cat nap.
3. Purple birds chirp.
4. The red cherries are riper than the others.
5. William's voice is weak.
6. Her red hair is very curly.
7. Rob worked hard in the warm weather.
8. Who would like to sing a song?
9. Swimming and sailing are wonderful things.
10. She cooks turkey stuffed with dressing for Thanksgiving.

SPANISH

Difficult Sounds

h	(hat)	w	(water)
j	(jet)	z	(zoo)
r	(red)	a	(man)
s	(sad)	e	(egg)
sh	(ship)	i	(sit)
th	(thin)	i	(mile)
ch	(then)	o	(hot)
v	(vote)	u	(up)

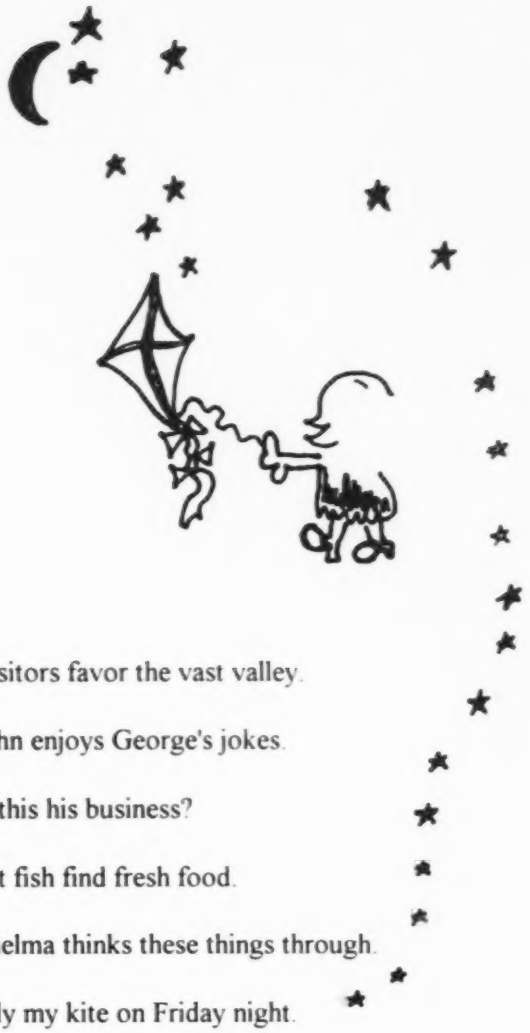
1. This chip dip is rich.
2. Julie enjoys jelly and jam.
3. Have a happy holiday.
4. The clock stopped last night at school.
5. That thin beef is the very best buy.
6. Georgia's peaches are big and juicy.
7. Please park your car in the garage.
8. Shelly showed the chair to Sharon.
9. Does this jet stop in Mississippi?
10. Southern cities have better weather in the winter than northern cities.

IV - 16

TAGALOG

Difficult Sounds

f	(fan)
j	(jet)
v	(vote)
th	(thin)
th	(then)
z	(zoo)

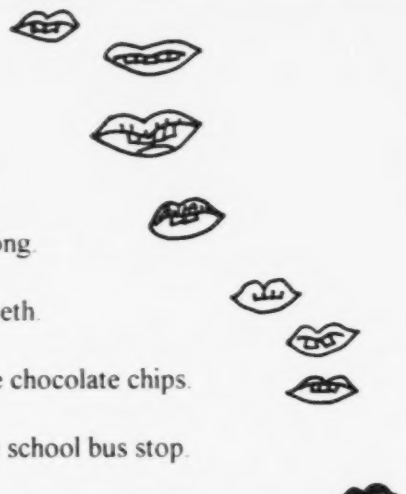


1. Visitors favor the vast valley.
2. John enjoys George's jokes.
3. Is this his business?
4. Fat fish find fresh food.
5. Thelma thinks these things through.
6. I fly my kite on Friday night.
7. Zelda's jazz band needs some pizzazz.
8. Vivian buys very big vitamins.
9. Did you pick this big gift?
10. Five very heavy waves covered the victims.

THAI

Difficult Sounds

ch	(chin)	w	(water)
l	(lip)	z	(zoo)
p, t, k	(top, mitt, pick) final	i	(sit)
s	(stop) s plus consonants	e	(bed)
th	(thin)	o	(go)
th	(then)	oo	(book)



1. It's not easy to study.
2. Charles read a good book.
3. "Oh, Suzannah" is a folk song.
4. Samantha went with Elizabeth.
5. Chuck chooses to chew the chocolate chips.
6. The students step up to the school bus stop.
7. Matthew thinks there are thirty-two teeth in his mouth.
8. Laura kept thick books in boxes.
9. Open that pop-top pack of pop, please.
10. Wild flowers will wilt without water.

TURKISH

Difficult Sounds

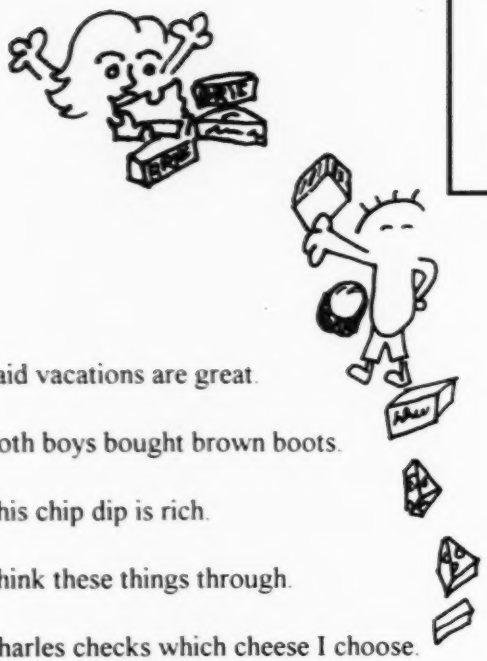
b, d, g	(tab, bad, bag) final	*th*	(then)
k, p, t	(cracker, upper, butter) medial	v	(very)
ng	ring	w	(water)
s	(stop) initial clusters with s	a	(man)
th	(thin)	e	(ten)

1. Stacy stands still.
2. Ted had a very good dog.
3. Stack the packages of butter on the upper shelf.
4. Hank gets giddy when he drinks.
5. Get them out of bed at ten.
6. Where is the white vase kept?
7. Harold thought these things were theirs.
8. Why would Martha wear violet to the wedding?
9. Swimming sends shivers down my spine.
10. Stop at the stationery store for stamps.

VIETNAMESE

Difficult Sounds

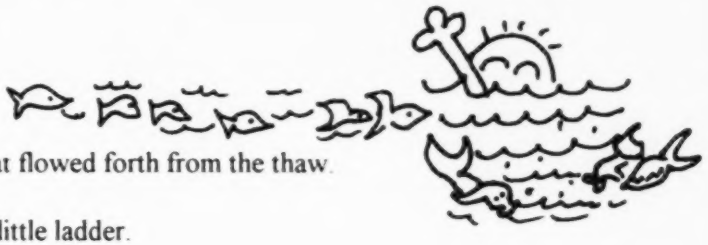
ch	(chin)	*th*	(then)
d	(dog)	ā	(take)
l	(lip)	a	(man)
s	(cats) final	ē	(seen)
th	(thin)	oo	(boot)

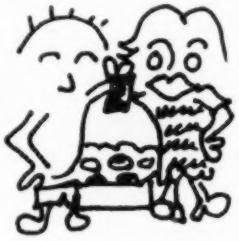


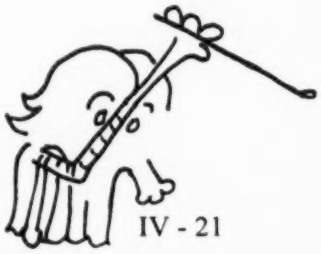
1. Paid vacations are great.
2. Both boys bought brown boots.
3. This chip dip is rich.
4. Think these things through.
5. Charles checks which cheese I choose.
6. Laura rarely writes letters.
7. Have you seen Ruth's terry cloth towel?
8. Dad does the dirty dishes.
9. Chew the chunks or you will choke.
10. Sue slathers sunscreen on her skin when she sits in the sun.

General Practice

1. She sells seashells by the seashore.
2. Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
3. How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?
4. Beth gave me big blue violets.
5. Fish feed at the fourth fathom.
6. The frozen ice formed floes that flowed forth from the thaw.
7. Lillian leans lightly against the little ladder.
8. Wayne washed his wrists in the warm running water.
9. Thelma thinks these thing through.
10. Holly held the heavy hose in both hands.
11. The Lincoln Lawn Service sells certified fertilizer.
12. This sink stinks more than you think.
13. Charlie shared chocolate with Sharon.
14. Heather thinks her thighs are thin.
15. Willie wishes his wrists were thick.
16. Lillian's lilies, so lovely and rare, are grown in the garden you see over there.
17. The fat cat sat at the back of that very hat rack.
18. Martha thoroughly thanked thirty thin weathermen.
19. Open that pack of pop-top pop, please.
20. Queenie's quail quivered quietly in the earthquake.







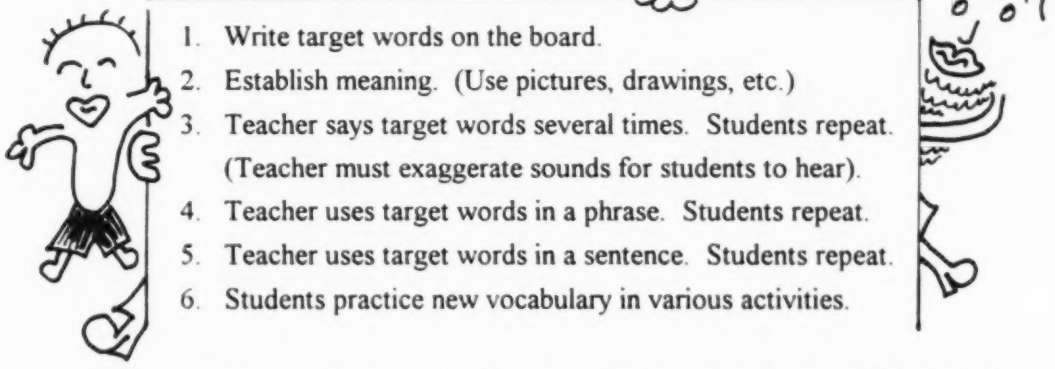
IV - 21

INTRODUCTION

PRONUNCIATION ACTIVITIES

The purpose of these pronunciation activities is to provide the ESL teacher with ideas, means, and methods of teaching English in practical, meaningful, and enjoyable ways.

These exercises aim to simplify teaching pronunciation by using a basic method for all activities. It is to be stressed, however, that this is only one method, and by no means the only one. Teachers should feel free to modify it.



1. Write target words on the board.
2. Establish meaning. (Use pictures, drawings, etc.)
3. Teacher says target words several times. Students repeat. (Teacher must exaggerate sounds for students to hear).
4. Teacher uses target words in a phrase. Students repeat.
5. Teacher uses target words in a sentence. Students repeat.
6. Students practice new vocabulary in various activities.

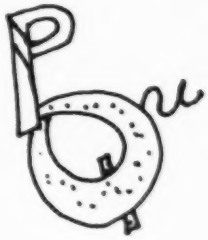
There are many variations to the above suggestions. Teachers should use their own judgment to decide how long to stay with any step, how often to spot check and correct, and finally when to stop. It's important not to be in a hurry when introducing new words and phrases and to allow time for the new sounds to sink in. On the other hand, teachers should keep up a good pace. By the time students have finished, they should feel as if they've had a good workout.

And finally, pronunciation activities should be fun. The spontaneous laughter that is created during a pronunciation class makes teaching a joy and learning a pleasure.

THE ALPHABET

What Do the Letters Sound Like?

An essential life skill for all ESL students is the ability to say (sound out) the letters of the alphabet. Yet, this activity is often given short shrift by the ESL teacher, who may think that learning the alphabet is "kindergarten stuff" or "too easy." She may even think that once taught, it is quickly learned and remembered. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The alphabet needs drilling, repetition, and practice. The ability to spell one's name and address and be easily understood is a vital skill for all ESL students.



Description of Activity

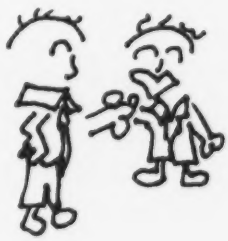
- Post the alphabet in large letters around the room.
- Pronounce letters after the teacher.
- Practice only vowels.
- Practice only isolated consonants.
- Students say and spell own name, address.
- Teacher dictates (spells) new words. Students listen and write.
- One student dictates (spells) teacher-generated words: Examples: names of students, cities and countries of origin, etc.

V - 2

SAY SOMETHING NICE

Students enjoy learning words and phrases that they can use immediately as they struggle to adapt in a new culture. They want to learn common expressions of polite and socially accepted speech. You, as the teacher, will do them an invaluable service by teaching them expressions of kindness, as well as some small talk.

Remember that any new words or phrases will not be learned overnight. It will take "a good listening ear" and much practice to speak and respond in an appropriate manner. Though such phrases seem deceptively easy to us, they are, in fact, very difficult for the foreign student to master.



Description of Activity

- Make a list of common "polite" expressions.
- A partial list might include:

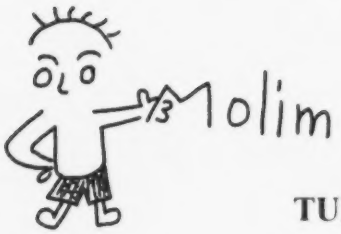
  "Thank you, I appreciate it."

  "How are you; how's it going?"

  "It's good to see you." "It's good to see you, too."

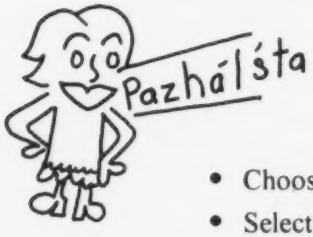
  "May I have . . . . ." (instead of "Give me.")

  "I've missed you." "I've missed you, too."
- Practice the same expression for at least a week.
- Don't be surprised if it takes weeks to "get the feel" of any given expression.
- Post these expressions in huge letters around the room.
- Use them during authentic classroom activities when appropriate.



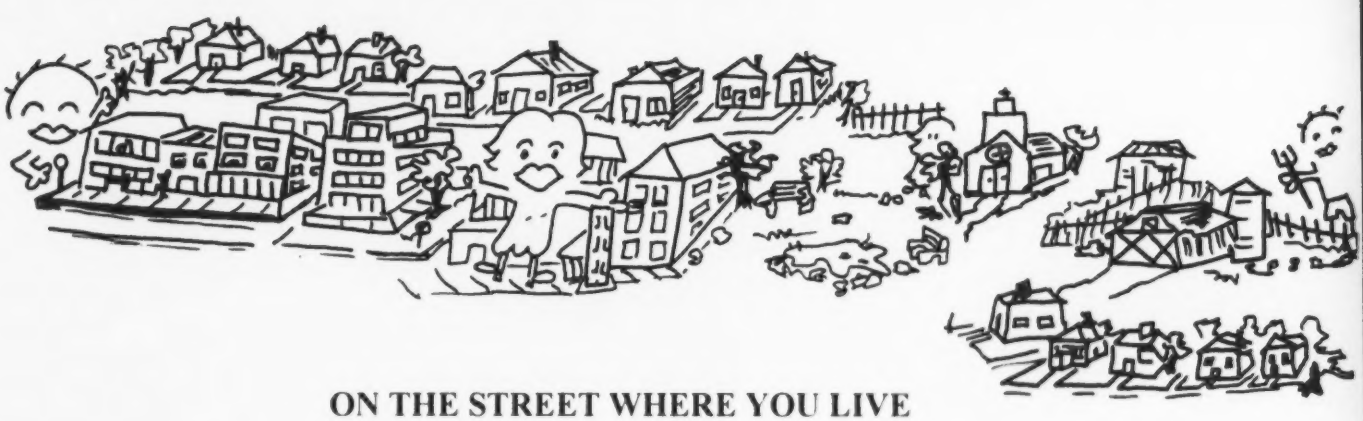
TURNING THE TABLES

In order to get the sense - - the frustration and the joy - - of learning a new language, have the students teach you and the class a simple poem, greeting, or expression in their own languages. Students love it as you struggle to master the sounds and words that roll so magically off their tongues! Further, in order to get the sense of what students are going through, teachers need frequent reminders of how much practice, repetition and diligence is required to learn even the simplest expression correctly. It's not easy! In short, we need to put ourselves in our students' shoes.



Description of Activity

- Choose a special day - - a holiday or a special occasion to learn about.
- Select one of the better students to "teach" the activity. It can be on the board or on handouts.
- Student-teacher uses the same steps as for other pronunciation activities, identifying key words, speaking slowly and making corrections.
- Class recites poem, greeting, or expression.



ON THE STREET WHERE YOU LIVE

Students need to be able to give their full home and work addresses in an understandable way. This skill needs to be perfected early, which makes this pronunciation drill very practical. An effective way of presenting this drill is to present the sentence in small segments and to work intensely from the end of the sentence forward. Be sure to move freely about the room and correct where necessary. It may be necessary to explain the U.S. address system.

Description of Activity

- Write on board: street, road, avenue, lane, boulevard, etc.
- Repeat above after the teacher several times.
- Write street names of students on the board.
- Repeat, for example, "Euclid Avenue."
- Introduce numbers -- 0 to 10 and practice.
- Repeat, "16025 Euclid Avenue."
- Finally, say the whole sentence, "I live at 16025 Euclid Avenue."

THE ALPHABET GAME

"I went to the store and bought . . . . ."

Once students have played the alphabet game, they request it often. They enjoy listening to each other, repeating, as well as the challenge of coming up with a new word. Don't be surprised if they insist on helping each other! This activity is especially useful after studying word groups such as foods, clothing, etc. The repetition provides excellent reinforcement for new vocabulary.

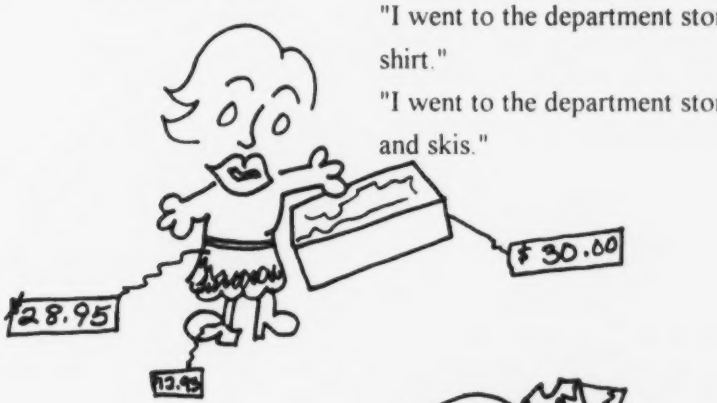
Description of Activity

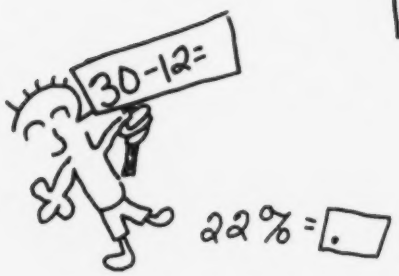
- Arrange small groups of six to eight students.
- First student begins, "I went to the store and bought apples."
- Second student repeats, "I went to the store and bought apples and bananas."
- Students continue, in turn, with their letter of the alphabet.

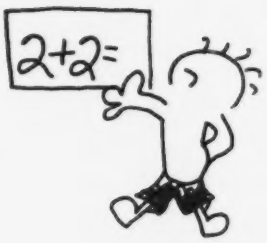
THE "S" GAME

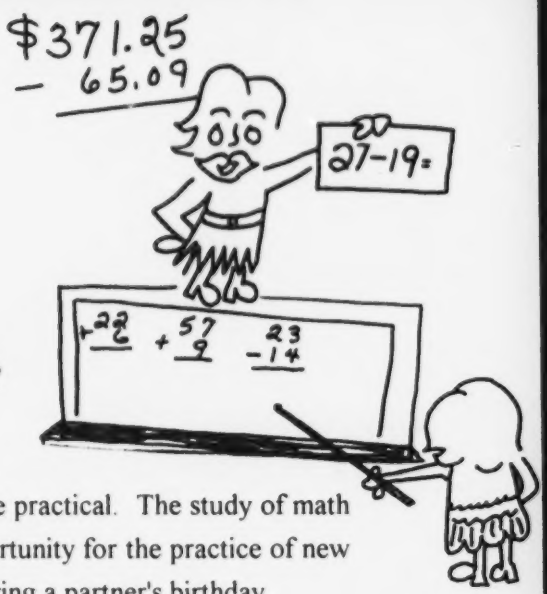
This variation of the Alphabet Game takes the same letter of the alphabet for all the students. For example, the letter "S" might be chosen, and all items must start with that letter. It becomes challenging for more advanced students especially, as they run out of nouns!

For example: "I went to the department store and bought shoes."
"I went to the department store and bought shoes and a shirt."
"I went to the department store and bought shoes, a shirt, and skis."



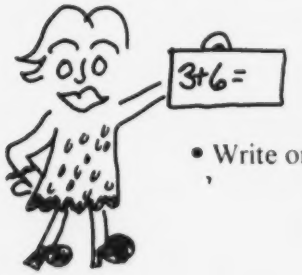






HOW'S YOUR MATH?

Students enjoy learning new skills as long as they are practical. The study of math terms is essential for daily life. This game provides an opportunity for the practice of new terms, the reinforcement of numbers, and the fun of discovering a partner's birthday.



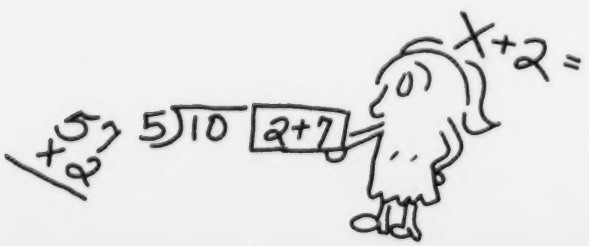
Description of Activity

- Write on board, explain, and practice the new vocabulary:

1. Add +
2. Subtract -
3. Multiply x
4. Divide ÷

- Working in pairs, student A gives student B the following instructions:

  - Write the number of the month in which you were born.
    (example: January, write the number 1)
  - Multiply that number by five (5 x 1 = 5).
  - Add seven (5 + 7 = 12).
  - Multiply by four (12 x 4 = 48).
  - Add thirteen (48 + 13 = 61).
  - Multiply by five (61 x 5 = 305).
  - Add the day of your birthday, for example 23 (305 + 23 = 328).
  - Subtract 205 (328 - 205 = 123). Your birthday is 1/23 or January 23.



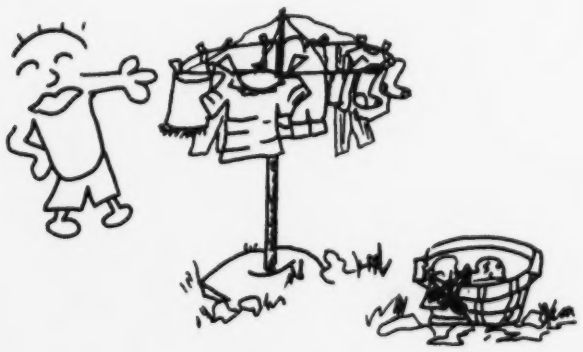
"SHIRT, SKIRT, SHORTS"

Tactile learning has long been recognized as a sure-fire way of increasing retention. If you touch something, you're more likely to remember it. Put an object in a student's hands, and you immediately create an almost ideal learning situation. The interest is immediate and learning not easily forgotten.

"Shirt, skirt, and shorts" all sound the same to a beginning student. The "ur" sound in shirt and skirt is difficult for students to master. Any activity which promotes pronunciation practice of common objects is important. Students find "Shirt, Skirt, and shorts" fun and worthwhile.

Description of Activity

- Bring in as many old skirts, shirts, and shorts to the classroom as you can.
- Identify the objects.
- Have the student hold up the object and say correctly, "This is a shirt." Pass it one to another student. Repeat.
- There are many variations of this game. Play store. "I don't want this shirt. I want a skirt." Practice – "this", "these," singular, plurals, etc.



THE USE OF PICTURES IN PRONUNCIATION

The use of pictures cannot be overstated as a vital resource for pronunciation drills. Students respond enthusiastically to nearly all pictures because they know immediately what the teacher is talking about. It gives them an important sense of confidence in their second language learning. A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words by Anthony Mollica and Norman Rockwell's paintings are possible rich sources for this purpose and can be used in creative ways.

Description of Activity

- Put the picture on the wall (the bigger the better).
- Identify basic vocabulary.
- Students repeat basic vocabulary.
- Teacher checks sounds, words, phrases, and sentences.
- Teacher allows students to finish her sentences as she talks about the picture.

V - 10

THAT'S MY BIRTHDAY, TOO

This fun birthday game can be used to practice possessive pronouns as well as regular possessives. Students often find it very difficult to say final "s" of possessives. In fact, saying, "my mother's birthday" instead of "my mother birthday" can be a major accomplishment. Remember that all final consonants are voiced, and the "s" in "mother's" is pronounced like a "z."

The teacher should exaggerate and hit those final consonants hard so that students can hear them and finally say them.

Description of Activity

- Teach target vocabulary:
  birthday, mother's, father's, brother's, sister's, son's, daughter's, etc.
  Pay careful attention to pronunciation.
- Students listen carefully as one student gives the month and day of his birth. (Note: The likelihood of two students sharing a birthday is very high, which creates instant interest.)
- Student one says, "My birthday is January 20."
- Teacher or a student responds, "Really? My daughter's birthday is January 23."
- Continue until each student has told his birthday.

SONGS, POEMS, AND RHYMES

Songs, poems, and rhymes are an excellent way to teach the rhythm, stress, and intonation of a language which are essential in transmitting meaning. If the accent (the phrasing) of a sentence is wrong, the student will not be understood even though he can say the word in isolation. It's important for the student to understand that English is spoken in phrases, that there are important pauses, and that certain syllables are accented quite strongly. In addition, some vowels and syllables are obscured (reduced) as they are spoken.

There is nothing better to accomplish this purpose than the inclusion of simple songs, poems, and rhymes as part of the curriculum. Traditional nursery rhymes are an excellent source of material.

Description of Activity

- Students copy poem off the board.
- Teacher identifies necessary vocabulary.
- Teacher reads slowly and accents strongly.

Teacher and students read together in normal English.

Some students may want to memorize it.

"THERE WAS AN OLD LADY"

This particular poem covers a great deal of ground in teaching good pronunciation. It shows how words are linked together, vowels reduced, and sentence structure kept intact as it tells a humorous story. Beginning students like it because the beat is strong and the story line repetitive. Advanced students like learning the new vocabulary and even enjoy memorizing all or part of the whole poem!

Description of Activity

- Identify vocabulary.
- Go over each verse several times.
- Teacher speaks; students repeat.
- Divide class into groups, each saying one verse, or alternate men and women speaking.
- Bring one group in front of class to recite it.

"THERE WAS AN OLD LADY"

There was an old lady who swallowed a fly.
I don't know why she swallowed a fly.
Perhaps she'll die.

There was an old lady who swallowed a spider.
It wiggled and wiggled and jiggled inside her.

She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die.

There was an old lady who swallowed a bird.
Have you heard, she swallowed a bird.

She swallowed the bird to catch the spider.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die.

There was an old lady who swallowed a cat.
Imagine that! She swallowed a cat.

She swallowed the cat to catch the bird.
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die.

There was an old lady who swallowed a dog.
She swallowed a dog as big as a hog.

She swallowed the dog to catch the cat.
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird.
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die.

There was an old lady who swallowed a cow.
I don't know how she swallowed a cow.

She swallowed the cow to catch the dog.
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat.
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird.
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die.

There was an old lady who swallowed a horse.
She died, of course!

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Another View of Linguistics

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